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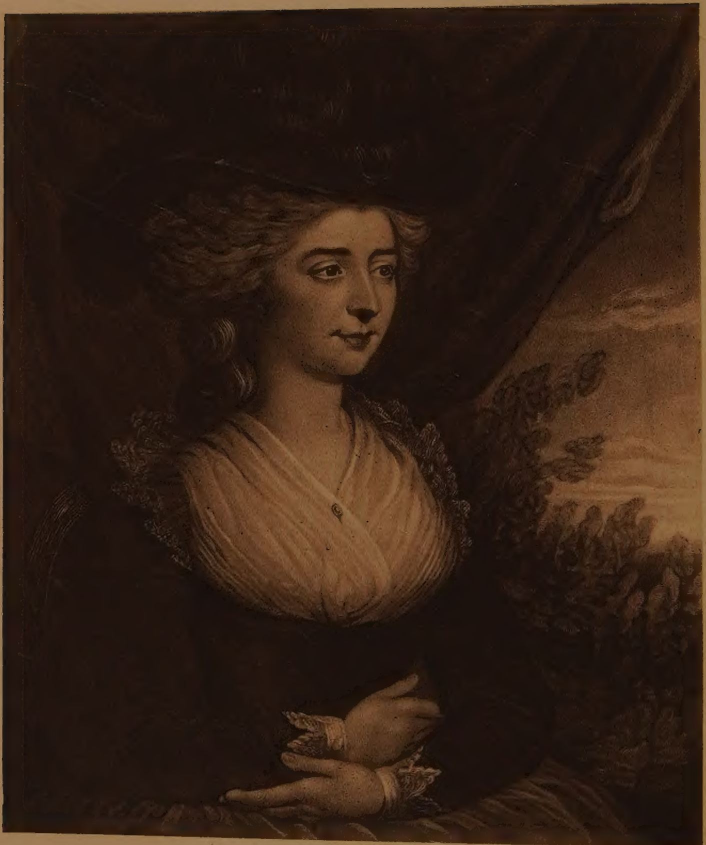
DIARY AND LETTERS OF MADAME D'ARBLAY

(1778 TO JUNE 1781)



Emery Walker Ph. Sc.

Fanny Burney
after E. F. Burney.

DIARY & LETTERS

OF

MADAME D'ARBLAY

(1778-1840)

AS EDITED BY HER NIECE
CHARLOTTE BARRETT

WITH PREFACE AND NOTES
BY
AUSTIN DOBSON

IN SIX VOLUMES
VOL. I

London
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1904

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TO

THE VENERABLE

CHARLES BURNEY

ARCHDEACON OF KINGSTON-ON-THAMES, AND
VICAR OF ST. MARK'S, SURBITON

THIS EDITION OF THE

DIARY AND LETTERS

OF HIS RELATIVE

MADAME D'ARBLAY

IS

WITH HIS PERMISSION

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

"THE SPIRIT WALKS OF EVERY DAY DECEASED."—YOUNG.
[*Mrs. Barrett's motto.*]

"IF SHE [MME. D'ARBLAY] RECORDED WITH MINUTE DILIGENCE ALL THE COMPLIMENTS, DELICATE AND COARSE, WHICH SHE HEARD WHEREVER SHE TURNED, SHE RECORDED THEM FOR THE EYES OF TWO OR THREE PERSONS WHO HAD LOVED HER FROM INFANCY, WHO HAD LOVED HER IN OBSCURITY, AND TO WHOM HER FAME GAVE THE PUREST AND MOST EXQUISITE DELIGHT. NOTHING CAN BE MORE UNJUST THAN TO CONFOUND THESE OUTPOURINGS OF A KIND HEART, SURE OF PERFECT SYMPATHY, WITH THE EGOTISM OF A BLUE-STOCKING, WHO PRATES TO ALL WHO COME NEAR HER ABOUT HER OWN NOVEL OR HER OWN VOLUME OF SONNETS."—MACAULAY (*Edinburgh Review*, January 1843, p. 539).

PREFACE

THIS edition of the *Diary and Letters*, 1778-1840, of Frances or Fanny Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay, is based on the seven volumes issued by Henry Colburn in 1842-46. Of the first two of these volumes, there are two impressions, one being fuller than the other. The title-pages give no indication of difference; and the only thing in the nature of a reference to such difference is a notification prefixed to the General Index in the last volume, announcing disingenuously that "the second impression of Vols. I. and II. differs from the first in the arrangement of the pages"; and further, that "the Index is made in accordance with the first." In the present edition the first impression of these two volumes has been followed, and the passages omitted from the second impression have been placed between square brackets. There is nothing to suggest why they were left out; and as they are here restored, it is needless to put forward any theory in order to account for their withdrawal. The other circumstances connected with the first appearance of the book are fully explained in the "Editor's Introduction."

The Appendices to the volumes—here arranged as six instead of seven—are new, and consist of unpublished letters, or extracts from other sources, which were too lengthy to be included in the Notes.

The Notes, with rare exceptions, generally specified, have been written for this edition. The Editor of 1842-46, Mrs. Charlotte Francis Barrett, had appended to six of her volumes some three or four pages of "Biographical Notes," which, at the date of their publication, were doubtless adequate. But they are now more than fifty years old; and it seemed expedient to substitute for them here Notes which should be at once more modern, more numerous, and not exclusively biographical. In those now offered to the public, conciseness has been attentively considered. While such modest aids to identification as dates of birth and death have not been disdained, it has been held that to give some idea of the position or achievement of the persons named at the precise moment when they come under the pen of the Diarist, is more useful than to recount their histories from the cradle to the grave. As to Notes which are not biographical, and which relate to places, books, quotations, occurrences, and so forth, it is hoped that the particulars supplied will sufficiently meet the requirements of the reader.

The Illustrations, consisting of Portraits, Views, Autographs, and Plans, have been carefully chosen. In all cases an attempt has been made to secure those only which are either actually mentioned in the text, or are nearly contemporary with that text; and full information respecting them will be found in the Lists of Illustrations, or at the foot of the illustrations themselves.

An Index accompanies each volume, and this, in Volume VI., takes the form of a General Index.

Thanks are due, and are hereby tendered, to the following persons:—to Archdeacon Burney, Vicar of St. Mark's, Surbiton, for information, autographs, and assistance generally; to Mr. F. Leverton Harris, M.P., of Camilla Lacey, Dorking, for information, autographs, and illustrations; to Mr. William Bousfield, of Fairfield, Great Bookham, for information and permission to photograph the cottage in which Madame D'Arblay lived for four years; to Mr. Arthur C. Benson, for permission to photograph Mrs. Delany's house at Windsor; to Messrs. George Bell and Sons, for permission to make use of the *Early Diary of Frances Burney*, published by them in 1889; and lastly (though not for the first time), to Mr. Henry R. Tedder, the Secretary and Librarian of the Athenæum Club, for valuable aid and sympathetic suggestion. Nor must acknowledgment be omitted to Mr. Emery Walker for the untiring interest he has taken in the procuring and preparing of the Illustrations; and to Mr. R. J. Lister for kindly undertaking to compile the Indexes.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

75 EATON RISE, EALING, W.,
October 1904.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION[1]

It has been asserted that if any person, however "unknown to fame," should write a journalising memoir of his own life, in which every thought and feeling should be faithfully portrayed, such a narrative could not fail of being curious and interesting.[2] Yet, considering the satisfaction which most people find in speaking of themselves, it is singular how few specimens of such autobiography exist.

Perhaps their scarcity may arise from a consciousness of the rare assemblage of qualities necessary to their successful production; for the writer should be endowed with candour that shall prompt him to "extenuate nothing,"—honestly setting down his own foibles and mistakes, which are sometimes more mortifying to self-love than graver faults. He should have acumen and penetration, enabling him to unravel his own secret feelings and motives, and to trace each sentiment and action to its source. He should be gifted with "the pen of a ready writer," in order to arrest thoughts and impressions which fade almost as fast as they arise;—and, what is most rare of all, he should possess, however alloyed by human weakness and infirmities, such a predominance of sound principles and virtuous dispositions, as may render it safe to sympathise in his feelings; otherwise his memoir must either corrupt or disgust the reader, by showing

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[1] By Mrs. Charlotte Francis Barrett, daughter of Mme. D'Arblay's younger sister Charlotte.

[2] The allusion is perhaps to Walpole:—"Mr. Gray the poet, has often observed to me, that, if any man were to form a Book of what he had seen and heard himself, it must, in whatever hands, prove a most useful and entertaining one." (Motto on title-page of Pinkerton's *Walpoliana.*)

> That hideous sight,—a naked human heart.[1]

To ensure a full and free narration, it might also be desirable for the memorialist to believe that his pages will meet no eye but that of indulgent friendship; since those who expect their portraits will be handed down to posterity can scarcely resist dressing them in holiday suits.

May we not, however, venture to affirm that all these supposed requisites were united in the case of Madame D'Arblay, whose journals and letters are now offered to the public? As an author she has long been known to the world, and the high place which her works have held in public estimation for more than sixty years,[2] renders criticism and comment superfluous.

Her long and virtuous life is now closed, and those who have derived pleasure and instruction from her publications may feel interested in reading her private journals, and thus becoming acquainted with the merits and peculiarities of her individual character; more especially as the timidity which made her always shrink from observation, confined to the circle of her chosen friends that knowledge of her intimate feelings and real excellence which won in no common degree their respect and love. We would also hope there may be a moral use in presenting the example of one who, being early exalted to fame and literary distinction, yet found her chief happiness in the discharge of domestic duties, and in the friendships and attachments of private life.

---

[1] Young's *Night Thoughts*, Night 3, l. 226.

[2] This, it will be remembered, was first published in 1842.

Frances Burney, the second daughter and third child of Dr. Burney, was born at Lynn Regis in Norfolk, on the 13th of June 1752. Her father had in the preceding year accepted the office of organist to that royal borough, having been obliged by ill health to quit London, and to relinquish more advantageous prospects.

The most remarkable features of Frances Burney's childhood were, her extreme shyness, and her backwardness at learning; at eight years of age, she did not even know her letters, and her elder brother used to amuse himself by pretending to teach her to read, and presenting the book to her, turned upside down,—which he declared she never found out. Her mother's friends generally gave her the name of "the little dunce"; but her mother, more discerning as well as more indulgent, always replied, that "*she had no fear about Fanny.*"

In fact, beneath an appearance so unpromising to cursory observers, there was an undercurrent, not only of deep feeling and affection, but of shrewd observation and lively invention; though the feelings were rarely called forth in the happy careless course of childish life, and the intellectual powers were concealed by shyness, except when her own individuality was forgotten in the zest with which she would enact other personages in the little sports and gambols she invented. Her father relates, that she "used, after having seen a play in Mrs. Garrick's box, to take the actors off, and compose speeches for their characters; for she could not read them."[1] But in company, or before strangers, she was silent, backward, and timid, even to sheepishness; and, from her shyness, had such profound gravity and composure of features, that those of Dr. Burney's friends who went often to his house, and entered into the different humours of the children, never called Fanny by any other name, from the time she had reached her eleventh year, than "the old lady."

---

[1] *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, ii. 168.

Dr. Burney adds, "she had always a great affection for me; had an excellent heart, and a natural simplicity and probity about her that wanted no teaching. In her plays with her sisters, and some neighbour's children, this straightforward morality operated to an uncommon degree in one so young. There lived next door to me, at that time, in Poland Street, and in a private house, a capital hair-merchant, who furnished peruques to the judges, and gentlemen of the law. The merchant's female children and mine, used to play together in the little garden behind the house; and, unfortunately, one day, the door of the wig-magazine being left open, they each of them put on one of those dignified ornaments of the head, and danced and jumped about in a thousand antics, laughing till they screamed at their own ridiculous figures. Unfortunately, in their vagaries, one of the flaxen wigs, said by the proprietor to be worth upwards of ten guineas—in those days a price enormous— fell into a tub of water, placed for the shrubs in the little garden, and lost all its gorgon buckle, and was declared by the owner to be totally spoilt. He was extremely angry, and chid very severely his own children; when my little daughter, the old lady, then ten years of age,[1] advancing to him, as I was informed, with great gravity and composure, sedately says; 'What signifies talking so much about an accident? The wig is wet, to be sure; and the wig was a good wig, to be sure; but it's of no use to speak of it any more; because what's done can't be undone.'

---

[1] This gives the date, 1762. The Burneys lived in Poland Street from 1760 to 1770.

"Whether these stoical sentiments appeased the enraged peruquier, I know not, but the younkers were stript of their honours, and my little monkies were obliged to retreat without beat of drum, or colours flying."[1]

Mrs. Burney was well qualified to instruct and train her numerous family; but they lost her early, and her chief attention appears to have been bestowed on the education of her eldest daughter, Esther, with whom she read all Pope's works, and Pitt's *Æneid*;[2] while the silent, observant Fanny learnt by heart passages from Pope, merely from hearing her sister recite them, and long before she cared for reading them herself.

In the year 1760, Dr. Burney returned to London with his wife and children, and took a house in Poland Street, where he renewed, under happy auspices, the acquaintance which, during his former residence in London, he had made with several of the most distinguished literary characters of his day. At this period, his eldest son James, afterwards Admiral Burney, had been sent to sea as a midshipman, in the ship of Admiral Montagu; his second son, Charles, afterwards the celebrated Greek scholar, was still quite a child; and his fourth daughter, Charlotte, was an infant.

From this young family, for whom maternal care appeared so necessary, their affectionate mother was removed by death in the autumn of 1761.[3] During the latter period of her illness, Frances and her sister Susanna had been placed in a boarding-school in Queen Square, that they might be out of the way; and when the sad intelligence of their loss was brought to them, the agony of Frances's grief was so great, though she was not more than nine years old, that her governess declared she had never met with a child of such intense and acute feelings.

---

[1] *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, ii. 170, 171.

[2] Christopher Pitt's translation of the *Æneid* appeared in 1740. He was the friend of Pope and Spence.

[3] September 28.

The bereaved father soon recalled his children home, and their education carried itself on, rather than owed its progress to any regular instruction. Dr. Burney was too much occupied by his professional engagements to teach them, except by his own example of industry and perseverance. These were so great that he actually studied and acquired the French and Italian languages on horseback; having for that purpose written out a pocket grammar and vocabulary of each.

His son Charles was, at a proper age, sent to the Charter House School, but his daughters remained at home; they had no governess, and though the eldest and the third, Esther and Susanna, were subsequently taken to France,[1] and placed for two years in a Parisian seminary, Frances shared not this advantage. Dr. Burney afterwards acknowledged that one reason which decided him against carrying her to France was her strong attachment to her maternal grandmother, who was a Roman Catholic. "He feared she might be induced to follow the religion of one whom she so much loved and honoured, if she should fall so early into the hands of any zealots who should attempt her conversion." She was, therefore, literally self-educated, and to use her own words, her sole emulation for improvement, and sole spur for exertion, were her unbounded veneration and affection for her father, "who, nevertheless, had not, at the time, a moment to spare for giving her any personal instruction; or even for directing her pursuits."

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[1] In June 1764.

At ten years of age she could read, and with the occasional assistance of her eldest sister she had taught herself to write; and no sooner had she acquired the latter accomplishment than she began to scribble, almost incessantly, little poems and works of invention, though in a character that was illegible to every one but herself. Her love of reading did not display itself till two or three years later; thus practically reversing the axiom that

> Authors before they write should read.

But although the education of Dr. Burney's daughters was not conducted according to the elaborate systems of the present day, they yet enjoyed some advantages which more than compensated for the absence of regular and salaried instructors. The sentiments and example of their father excited them to love whatever was upright, virtuous, and amiable; while, from not being secluded in a schoolroom, they also shared the conversation of their father's guests; and, in London, Dr. Burney's miscellaneous but agreeable society included some of those most eminent for literature in our own country, together with many accomplished foreigners, whose observations and criticisms were in themselves lessons. Perhaps the taste of Frances Burney was formed much in the same way as that of her celebrated contemporary, Madame de Staël, who relates that she used to sit with her work, on a little stool at her mother's knee, and listen to the conversation of all Monsieur Necker's enlightened visitors; thus gathering notions on literature and politics long ere it was suspected that she knew the meaning of the words.

If, however, the above methods were of themselves sufficient for education, all good conversers might offer a "royal road" to learning. But the benefit here obtained was chiefly that of directing the attention to intellectual pursuits, enlightening the judgment, and exciting a thirst for knowledge which led the youthful Frances to diligent and laborious application. By the time she was fourteen she had carefully studied many of the best authors in her father's library, of which she had the uncontrolled range. She began also to make extracts, keeping a *catalogue raisonné* of the books she read; and some of her early remarks were such as would not have disgraced a maturer judgment.

Thus passed, not idly nor unprofitably, nearly six years after the death of that mother who would have been her best instructress. Dr. Burney then made another journey to Paris, for the purpose of conducting home his daughters, Esther and Susanna, whose allotted two years of education in that capital had expired. Their improvement had kept pace with their father's hopes and wishes, but he gave up his original plan of carrying Frances and Charlotte abroad on the return of their sisters: Susanna volunteered to instruct Fanny in French; and they were all so enchanted to meet again, that perhaps Dr. Burney's parental kindness withheld him from proposing a new separation.

On the first return of the youthful travellers,[1] Susanna, who was then scarcely fourteen, wrote a sort of comparison between her two elder sisters, which, as it happens to have been preserved, and may in some measure illustrate their early characters, we will give *verbatim*.

"Hetty seems a good deal more lively than she used to appear at Paris; whether it is that her spirits are better, or that the great liveliness of the inhabitants made her appear grave there by comparison, I know not: but she was there remarkable for being *sérieuse*, and is here for being gay and lively. She is a most sweet girl. My sister Fanny is unlike her in almost everything, yet both are very amiable, and love each other as sincerely as ever sisters did. The characteristics of Hetty seem to be wit, generosity, and openness of heart; Fanny's,—sense, sensibility, and bashfulness, and even a degree of prudery. Her understanding is superior, but her diffidence gives her a bashfulness before company with whom she is not intimate, which is a disadvantage to her. My eldest sister shines in conversation, because, though very modest, she is totally free from any *mauvaise honte*: were Fanny equally so, I am persuaded she would shine no less. I am afraid that my eldest sister is too communicative, and that my sister Fanny is too reserved. They are both charming girls—*des filles comme il y en a peu.*"[1]

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[1] In 1767.

Very soon after his return from Paris, an important change took place in Dr. Burney's domestic circle, by his forming a second matrimonial connection, and bringing home to his family as their mother-in-law,[2] Mrs. Stephen Allen, the widow of a Lynn merchant, and herself the parent of several children who had been friends and playmates of the young Burneys.[3] Both families were pleased at this reunion; a larger house was taken, in Queen Square, that they might all reside under the same roof,—although this dwelling was afterwards exchanged for a house in St. Martin's Street; and the new Mrs. Burney, who was herself highly intellectual, entered with intelligent delight into the literary circle which formed the solace and refreshment of her husband.

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[1] In Letter lxv. of *Evelina*, Miss Burney, applying this locution to Lord Orville, attributes it to Marmontel.

[2] Stepmother. But "mother-in-law" for "stepmother," according to Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary*, 1903, is still in general colloquial use.

[3] Dr. Burney's second marriage took place at St. James's, Westminster, in October 1767.

Among those friends who were accustomed to assemble round their tea-table, or to enliven their simple early supper, were, Sir Robert and Lady Strange,—the former so well known for his admirable engravings, and his lady for her strong sense and original humour; Dr. Hawkesworth, the worthy and learned editor of Byron's and Cook's *First Voyages*; Garrick, and his amiable wife, the friend of Hannah More; Barry, the painter, whose works still adorn the Adelphi; Mr. Twining, the translator of *Aristotle*; Mason, the poet; Mr. Greville and his lady, the latter celebrated as the authoress of the beautiful "Ode to Indifference"; Dr. Armstrong; Arthur Young, the agriculturist, who had married a sister of Mrs. Burney's; John Hutton, the Moravian; the musical and clever La Trobes, and Nollekens, the sculptor. To these might be added many others of equal or superior celebrity, who formed part of Dr. Burney's society, as time and circumstances brought them within his reach.

But the companion and counsellor who was dearest to himself, and most loved and honoured by his youthful group, was Mr. Crisp. This gentleman, several years older than Dr. Burney, had been to him a "Guide, Philosopher, and Friend" in early life; they had then been separated in consequence of Mr. Crisp's residing on the Continent during several years, but when they again met, their intimacy was renewed with a cordiality and delight that only ended with life.

At this time Mr. Crisp had given up the world, in consequence of various losses, diminished fortune, and disappointed hopes; and he had fixed his dwelling in an old-fashioned country house, called Chessington Hall, not far from Kingston in Surrey, and within a few miles from Hampton. This mansion stood upon a large and nearly desolate common, and not a road or even a track led to it from Epsom, which was the nearest town. It was encircled by ploughed fields, and one-half of the building was inhabited by a farmer; while in the remaining portion dwelt the proprietor, Christopher Hamilton, Esq., with whom Mr. Crisp had adopted some *picnic* plan, which enabled him to consider Chessington as his decided residence. At the death of Mr. Hamilton, the house, which was then his only property, devolved to his maiden sister, Mrs. Hamilton, who, with her niece, Miss Kitty Cooke, continued to receive Mr. Crisp as an inmate, and to admit other persons as occasional boarders.[1]

This independent method of visiting his friend, and of obtaining country air and exercise for his children, exactly suited the views of Dr. Burney, and they all in turn, or in groups, enjoyed the society of their Chessington *Daddy*, as they familiarly called Mr. Crisp; while he was indulgent to all their youthful vagaries, and amused with observing their different characters.

Among those who most frequently availed themselves of Mrs. Hamilton's arrangement was Mrs. Gast, the sister of Mr. Crisp, who, whenever she quitted her house at Burford, in order to visit her brother, failed not to enhance the pleasure of the Chessington meetings by her good sense and kind nature, added to a considerable degree of cultivation.

But whatever might offer itself of occupation or amusement, Fanny continued secretly, yet perseveringly, her own literary attempts. When in London she used to write in a little playroom up two pair of stairs,[2] which contained the toys of the younger children. At Lynn, to which place the doctor's family paid annual visits, she would shut herself up in a summer-house which they called *The Cabin*, and there unburden her mind, by writing the tales and compositions with which her fancy abounded.[1]

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[1] Chessington Hall was pulled down in 1832, and a new building was erected in its place. The grounds, however, remain much the same as of old, and are carefully preserved by the Chancellor family, the present proprietors.

[2] This was probably in Queen Square, as it scarcely describes the Newton Observatory in St. Martin's Street, where she says she wrote in 1774 (*Early Diary of Frances Burney*, 1889, i. 304).

To none but her sister Susanna was the secret of this authorship confided; and even she could seldom hear or read these productions, for want of private opportunities by which she might avoid betraying them to others.

Notwithstanding all these precautions, the vigilant eye of their mother-in-law was not long in discovering Fanny's love of seclusion, her scraps of writing, and other tokens of her favourite employment, which excited no small alarm in her.

Perhaps if she had desired to see the little manuscripts she might have perceived in them traces of genius worth encouraging; but while her delicacy prevented such investigation, her good sense, acting upon general principles, led her to inveigh very frequently and seriously against the evil of a scribbling turn in young ladies—the loss of time, the waste of thought, in idle, crude inventions—and the (at that time) utter discredit of being known as a female writer of novels and romances.

Whatever conviction these strictures may have produced, they at least so wrought upon Fanny's sense of duty and obedience, that she resolved to make an *auto da fé* of all her manuscripts, and, if possible, to throw away her pen. Seizing, therefore, an opportunity when Dr. and Mrs. Burney were from home, she made over to a bonfire in a paved play-court her whole stock of prose compositions, while her faithful Susanna stood by, weeping at the conflagration. Among the works thus immolated, was one tale of considerable length, the "History of Caroline Evelyn," the mother of *Evelina.*

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[1] The Cabin is referred to in the *Early Diary*, 1889, i. 11, 12, 13.

This sacrifice was made in the young authoress's fifteenth year, and for some weeks she probably adhered to her resolution of composing no more works of fiction, and began, perhaps as a less objectionable employment, the Journal which she continued during so many years. But the perennial fountain could not be restrained; her imagination was haunted by the singular situations to which Caroline Evelyn's infant daughter might be exposed, from the unequal birth by which she hung suspended between the elegant connections of her mother, and the vulgar ones of her grandmother; thus presenting contrasts and mixtures of society so unusual, yet, under the supposed circumstances, so natural, that irresistibly, and almost unconsciously, the whole story of *Evelina: or, A Young Lady's Entrance into the World,* was pent up in the inventor's memory, ere a paragraph was committed to paper.

Writing was to her always more difficult than composing, because her time and her pen found ample employment in transcribing for her father, who was occupied at every spare moment with preparations for his great work, *The General History of Music.*

In the summer of 1770, Fanny obtained several months of leisure for her own studies and compositions, as Dr. Burney then set out on a solitary tour through France and Italy, for the purpose of collecting materials for his *History*; but, on his return in the spring of 1771,[1] she was employed as his principal amanuensis, in preparing the minutes of his tour for the press. All his daughters, however, shared in this service, copying his numerous manuscripts, tracing over and over again the same page when his nicety of judgment suggested fresh alterations; while their patient and affectionate assiduity brought its own reward, in the extension of knowledge and improvement of taste which accrued from such labours.

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[1] Dr. Burney returned in January.

Dr. Burney's *Italian Tour* was no sooner published[1] than he set out on another journey, for the same purpose of musical research, in Germany and the Low Countries. His family resided during his absence at Lynn and at Chessington, where Fanny gradually arranged and connected the disjointed scraps and fragments in which *Evelina* had been originally written, whenever a quarter of an hour's leisure and solitude had allowed her thus to preserve the creations of her fancy. She mentions, with great *naïveté*, in her *Lynn Journal*, that she never indulged herself with writing or reading except in the afternoon;[2] always scrupulously devoting her time to needlework till after dinner. As, however, the hours of repast were somewhat earlier in those days than at present, this notable self-denial may only have sent her to her favourite pursuits with fresh vigour.

The arrival of her father from Germany turned her thoughts into another channel; as a long and painful illness, which Dr. Burney owed to the fatigues and difficulties of a hurried journey, called for the "incessant assiduity of his fondly attached wife and daughters to nurse him through it." Even then, when confined to his bed by spasmodic rheumatism, he generally kept one of his daughters seated near him, pen in hand, that, during the intervals of suffering, he might dictate the ideas which occurred to him for his musical work; and perhaps the example of such literary perseverance was a stimulus that amply compensated for the hindrance it occasioned.

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[1] In May 1771.

[2] *Early Diary*, 1889, i. 14.

After the Doctor's recovery, some years still elapsed before he was able to execute his plan; and it was not till the year 1776 that he brought out the first volume of his *History of Music.*[1] During all this period of literary occupation and anxiety, it is not surprising that his daughter, gifted, though unconsciously, with equal powers, should, even in sympathy with her father's feelings, be seized with a wish to see a work of her own also in print; though she was far from desiring the public suffrage which he coveted; on the contrary, she fully intended always to remain unknown.

She communicated this idea to her sisters, under promise of inviolable secrecy; and, in furtherance of the project, she now transcribed the manuscript of *Evelina*, in an upright feigned hand; for, as she was her father's amanuensis, she feared lest her common writing might accidentally be seen by some compositor employed in printing the *History of Music*, and so lead to detection.

Growing weary, however, of this manual labour, after she had thus prepared the first and second volumes, she wrote a letter, without signature, offering the unfinished work to Mr. Dodsley, and promising to send the sequel in the following year. This letter was forwarded by the post, with a request that the answer might be directed to a coffee-house.[2]

Her younger brother, Charles, though without reading a word of the manuscript, accepted a share in the frolic, and undertook to be her agent at the coffee-house and with the bookseller. But Mr. Dodsley declined looking at anything anonymous; and the young group, "after sitting in committee on this lofty reply," next fixed upon Mr. Lowndes, a bookseller in the City[1]—who desired to see the manuscript; and shortly after it had been conveyed to him, signified in a letter to the unknown author, that he could not publish an unfinished book, though he liked the work; but he should be ready to purchase and print it when it should be completed.

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[1] The *German Tour* had been published in May 1773, and contained detailed "Proposals" for the *History of Music.*

[2] The Orange Coffee House in the Haymarket, not very far from Dr. Burney's house in St. Martin's Street.

Disappointed at this stipulation, reasonable as it was, the inexperienced authoress was on the point of giving up her scheme altogether; and yet, as she has herself observed, "*to be thwarted on the score of our inclination, acts more frequently as a spur than as a bridle*";[2] so that, ere another year could pass away, she had almost involuntarily completed and transcribed her third volume.

But, during the hesitation occasioned by the demand of Mr. Lowndes, another difficulty occurred, for she felt a conscientious scruple whether it would be right to allow herself such an amusement unknown to her father. She had never taken any important step without his sanction, and had now refrained from asking it through confusion at acknowledging her authorship and dread of his desiring to see her performance. However, in this, as in every instance during her life, she no sooner saw what was her duty, than she honestly performed it. Seizing, therefore, an opportunity when her father was bidding her a kind farewell, preparatory to a Chessington visit, she avowed to him, with many blushes, "her secret little work; and her odd inclination to see it in print;"[3] adding, that her brother Charles would transact the affair with a bookseller at a distance, so that her name could never transpire, and only entreating that he would not himself ask to see the manuscript. "His amazement was 'even' surpassed by his amusement; and his laugh was so gay, that, revived by its cheering sound, she lost all her fears and embarrassment, and heartily joined in it; though somewhat at the expense of her new author-like dignity."[1]

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[1] Thomas Lowndes, of 77 Fleet Street.

[2] *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, ii. 129.

[3] *Ibid.* ii. 130.

Dr. Burney thought her project as innocent as it was whimsical, and kindly embracing her, enjoined her to be careful in guarding her own *incognita*, and then dropped the subject without even asking the name of her book.

With heightened spirits she now forwarded the packet to Mr. Lowndes, who, in a few days, signified his approbation, and sent an offer of twenty pounds for the manuscript:—"An offer which was accepted with alacrity; and boundless surprise at its magnificence!"[2]

In the ensuing January 1778, *Evelina* was published; a fact which only became known to its writer from her hearing the newspaper advertisement read accidentally at breakfast-time, by her mother-in-law, Mrs. Burney.[3]

And here we gladly suspend this attempt at introducing to the public the *Memoirs of Madame D'Arblay.* From this period till her marriage her Journal contains a minute and animated narrative of all that the reader can wish to know concerning her. He was entreated to bear in mind that it was originally intended for no eye but her own, though she afterwards extended the privilege to her sisters, to Mr. Crisp, and to Mrs. Locke; making, for these trusted friends, as she has herself expressed it, "a window in her breast," yet disclosing, in the simplicity of her ingenuous confidence, such undeviating uprightness of character, such unhackneyed nobleness of feeling, that now, when she is removed far above the reach of embarrassment or pain from this publication, it cannot be derogatory to her beloved memory to make known her inmost thoughts, as far as she has left them recorded; while it might be unjust to withhold the lessons conveyed incidentally, not only by traits of filial duty and generous self-denial in the historian herself, but by the picture she exhibits of domestic virtues in the most exalted rank, and of sound discretion, united with humble faith and pious resignation, under the most painful and trying circumstances — such as she witnessed and deeply venerated in her august Royal Mistress.

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[1] *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii. 131.

[2] *Ibid.* ii. 132.

[3] See note to p. 9. Mrs. Barrett follows the *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii. 132. Upon those *Memoirs* she seems to have mainly relied, though some of her quotations are not textual. Where they have been exactly verified, their source has been given.

To those personal friends of Madame D'Arblay whose affection for her may render them jealous of any apparent deviation from her intentions, it may be satisfactory to state, that in her latter years, when all her juvenile adventures seemed to her "as a tale that is told," and when she could dwell, sadly yet submissively, on recollections of deeper interest, she herself arranged these Journals and Papers with the most scrupulous care; affixing to them such explanations as would make them intelligible to her successors—avowing a hope that some instruction might be derived from them—and finally, in her last hours, consigning them to the editor, with full permission to publish whatever might be judged desirable for that purpose, and with no negative injunction, except one, which has been scrupulously obeyed, viz.: that whatever might be effaced or omitted, nothing should in anywise be altered or added to her records.

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION[1]

To have some account of my thoughts, manners, acquaintance, and actions, when the hour arrives at which time is more nimble than memory, is the reason which induces me to keep a Journal—a Journal in which, I must confess, my *every* thought must open my whole heart.

But a thing of the kind ought to be addressed to somebody—I must imagine myself to be talking—talking to the most intimate of friends—to one in whom I should take delight in confiding, and feel remorse in concealment; but who must this friend be? To make choice of one in whom I can but *half* rely, would be to frustrate entirely the intention of my plan. The only one I could wholly, totally confide in, lives in the same house with me, and not only never *has*, but never *will*, leave me one secret to tell her. To *whom* then *must* I dedicate my wonderful, surprising, and interesting adventures?—to *whom* dare I reveal my private opinion of my nearest relations? my secret thoughts of my dearest friends? my own hopes, fears, reflections, and dislikes?—Nobody.

To Nobody, then, will I write my Journal! since to Nobody can I be wholly unreserved, to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my heart, with the most unlimited confidence, the most unremitting sincerity, to the end of my life! For what chance, what accident, can end my connections with Nobody? No secret *can* I conceal from Nobody, and to Nobody can I be ever unreserved. Disagreement cannot stop our affection—time itself has no power to end our friendship. The love, the esteem, I entertain for Nobody, Nobody's self has not power to destroy. From Nobody I have nothing to fear. The secrets sacred to friendship Nobody will not reveal; when the affair is doubtful, Nobody will not look towards the side least favourable.

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[1] See *facsimile* at p. 20.

[The above are the opening passages of Miss Burney's Diary, which she commenced at the age of fifteen years. They are given because they express in the writer's own words her design and objects in undertaking a task the results of which are now about to be laid before the world.

That portion of the Diary which intervenes between the above-named period and the publication of *Evelina* (in 1778) it has been thought right to withhold,—at least for the present;—for though it is, to the family and friends of the writer, quite as full of interest as the subsequent portions, the interest is of a more private and personal nature than that which attaches to the Journal after its writer became universally known as the authoress of *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, etc.

Whether the more juvenile portions of the Journal see the light hereafter or not,[1] will in some measure depend on the temper in which the portions now offered may be received by the public. In the meantime, it should be mentioned that after Miss Burney had for some years addressed her Journal as above (to "Nobody")—when its topics began to assume a more general and public interest, she changed this rather embarrassing feature of her plan, and addressed these records of her life and thoughts to her beloved sister, Miss Susan Burney (afterwards Mrs. Phillips), and occasionally to her accomplished and venerated friend, Mr. Crisp, of Chessington,—to whom the packets were forwarded respectively, from time to time, as opportunities offered (Mrs. Barrett's note)].

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[1] These portions have since been published in two volumes, under the title of *The Early Diary of Frances Burney*, 1768-78, *with a Selection from her Correspondence, and from the Journals of her Sisters, Susan and Charlotte Burney.* Edited by [Mrs.] Annie Raine Ellis. London: George Bell and Sons, 1889.

PART I

1778

The publication of *Evelina*—Its designs and objects—Secrecy of its publication—Letter from the publisher—Alarm of the writer at being known—Awkward predicament—Critiques on *Evelina*—Mr. Crisp—*Evelina* read by Dr. Burney—His discovery of its author—Dr. Johnson—Letters from Miss Burney to her father—Mrs. Thrale—Astonishing success of *Evelina*—Disclosure of its authorship to her mother—Mrs. Cholmondeley—Mrs. Thrale—Mr. Lowndes—Letters from Miss Burney to her sister—Dr. Johnson—Miss Burney's feelings on her unlooked-for success as an authoress—Guesses as to the writer of *Evelina*—Diary resumed—Dr. Burney acquaints Mrs. Thrale with the secret—Singular position of the writer—Letter of Mrs. Thrale—Madame Riccoboni—Dr. Johnson reads *Evelina*—His opinion of it—Anna Williams—Invitation to Streatham—The author's alarm at meeting the literary circle there—Great profits of the publisher—First visit to Streatham—Her reception by the Thrales—Mrs. Thrale's admiration of *Evelina*—She describes Dr. Johnson's imitating characters in *Evelina*—Mr. Seward—First introduction to Dr. Johnson—His conversation—Garrick—His prologues and epilogues—Garrick and Wilkes—Wear and tear of the face—Sir John Hawkins—An "unclubable man"—A mean couple—Sir Joshua Reynolds—He sits up all night to read *Evelina*—Miss Burney visits Mr. Lowndes—His account of the author of *Evelina*—Secret history—Letters from Mr. Crisp—Anecdote of Quin the actor.

THIS year was ushered in by a grand and most important event! At the latter end of January the literary world was favoured with the first was so lately lodged, in all privacy, in my bureau, may now be seen by every butcher and baker, cobbler and tinker, throughout the three kingdoms, for the small tribute of threepence.[1]]

My Aunt Anne and Miss Humphries[2] being settled at this time at Brompton, I was going thither with Susan to tea, when Charlotte[3] acquainted me that they were then employed in reading *Evelina* to the invalid, my cousin Richard. [My sister had recommended it to Miss Humphries, and my aunts and Edward[4] agreed they would read it, but without mentioning anything of the author.]

This intelligence gave me the utmost uneasiness —I foresaw a thousand dangers of a discovery—I dreaded the indiscreet warmth of all my confidants. In truth, I was quite sick with apprehension, and was too uncomfortable to go to Brompton, and Susan carried my excuses.

Upon her return I was somewhat tranquillised, for she assured me that there was not the smallest suspicion of the author, and that they had concluded it to be the work of a *man!* [and Miss Humphries, who read it aloud to Richard, said several things in its commendation, and concluded them by exclaiming, "It's a thousand pities the author should lie concealed."]

Finding myself more safe than I had apprehended, I ventured to go to Brompton next day. In my way upstairs I heard Miss Humphries in the midst of Mr. Villars' letter of consolation upon Sir John Belmont's rejection of his daughter; and just as I entered the room she cried out, "How pretty that is!"

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[1] A penny a volume,—the circulating library fee.

[2] A lady from Worcester.

[3] See Editor's Introduction, p. 5, as to Susan and Charlotte.

[4] Edward and Richard were sons of Dr. Burney's brother, Richard Burney of Worcester.

How much in luck would she have thought herself had she known *who* heard her!

In a private confabulation which I had with my Aunt Anne, she told me a thousand things that had been said in its praise, and assured me they had not for a moment doubted that the work was a *man's*.

[Comforted and made easy by these assurances, I longed for the diversion of hearing their observations, and, therefore (though rather *mal à propos*), after I had been near two hours in the room, I told Miss Humphries that I was afraid I had interrupted her, and begged she would go on with what she was reading.

"Why," cried she, taking up the book, "we have been prodigiously entertained," and very readily she continued.]

I must own I suffered great difficulty in refraining from laughing upon several occasions,—and several times, when they praised what they read, I was upon the point of saying, "You are very good!" and so forth, and I could scarcely keep myself from making acknowledgments, and bowing my head involuntarily. However, I got off perfectly safe.

[*Monday.*—Susan and I went to tea at Brompton. We met Miss Humphries coming to town. She told us she had just finished *Evelina*, and gave us to understand that she could not get away until she had done it. We heard afterwards from my aunt the most flattering praises, and Richard could talk of nothing else. His encomiums gave me double pleasure from being wholly unexpected, for I had prepared myself to hear that he held it extremely cheap. And I was yet more satisfied because I was sure they were sincere, as he convinced me that he had not the most distant idea of suspicion, by finding great fault with *Evelina* herself for her bashfulness with such a man as Lord Orville.

I *could* have answered him that he ought to consider the original character of *Evelina*—that she had been brought up in the strictest retirement; that she knew nothing of the world, and only acted from the impulses of nature; and that her timidity always prevented her from daring to hope that Lord Orville was seriously attached to her. In short, I *could* have bid him read the Preface again, where she is called "the offspring of Nature, and of Nature in her simplest attire." But I *feared* appearing too well acquainted with the book, and I rejoiced that an unprejudiced reader should make no weightier objection.]

It seems, to my utter amazement, Miss Humphries has guessed the author to be Anstey, who wrote the *Bath Guide*![1] How improbable and how extraordinary a supposition! But they have both of them done it so much honour that, but for Richard's anger at Evelina's bashfulness, I never could believe they did not suspect me. [I never went to Brompton without finding the third volume in Richard's hands; he speaks of all the characters as if they were his acquaintance, and praises different parts perpetually. Both he and Miss Humphries seem to have it by heart, for it is always *à propos* to whatever is the subject of discourse, and their whole conversation almost consists of quotations from it.

As Richard's recovery seemed now confirmed, his Worcester friends grew impatient to see him, and he fixed upon Tuesday to leave town, to the great regret of us all, glad as we were that he was able to make the journey. Sunday, therefore, was settled for his making a last visit at our house, that he might again see my father and try his own strength.

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[1] Christopher Anstey's *New Bath Guide: or, the Memoirs of the B–r–d Family*, had been published in 1766.

I now grew very uneasy, lest Miss Humphries and Richard should speak of the book to my mother, and lest she should send for it to read, upon their recommendation; for I could not bear to think of the danger I should run from my own consciousness, and various other causes, if the book were brought into the house. I therefore went on Saturday morning to consult with my aunt at Brompton. She advised, nay, *besought*, me to tell them the real state of the case at once, but I could not endure to do that, and so, after much pondering, I at last determined to take my chance.

Richard, in handing me some macaroons, chose to call them *macaronies*, and said, "Come, Miss Fanny, you *must* have some of these—they are all *Sir Clement Willoughbys*,—all in the highest style,—and I am sure to be like *him*, will recommend them to *you*, for *his* must be a very favourite character with you; a character in the *first style*, give me leave to assure you."[1]

. . . . . .

March 30.—I have just received a letter from my dear Charles, in which he informs me that he has subscribed to a circulating library at Reading, and then he adds: "I am to have *Evelina* to-day; the man told me it was spoken very highly of, and very much inquired after; that, as yet, there had been no *critique* upon it, but that it was thought one of the best publications we have had for a long time."

As to a critique, it is with fear and fidgets I await it. Next Wednesday I expect to be in one of the reviews.—O heavens! what should I do if I were known, for I have very little doubt I shall be horribly mauled.

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[1] From some detached passages of Fanny's papers, printed by Mrs. Ellis (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 219), it seems that the secret was revealed to Richard Burney before he left London for Worcester.

. . . . . .

I will copy the *Monthly Review* of my book; in the *Critical* I have not yet appeared.[1]

But hold, first in order comes the *London Review* for February 1778 by W. Kenrick.[2]

> *Evelina*—The history of a young lady exposed to very critical situations. There is much more merit, as well respecting style, character and incident, than is usually to be met with among our modern novels.

From the *Monthly Review* for April 1778.

> *Evelina: or a young Lady's Entrance into the World.*—This novel has given us so much pleasure in the perusal, that we do not hesitate to pronounce it one of the most sprightly, entertaining, and agreeable productions of this kind which has of late fallen under our notice. A great variety of natural incidents, some of the comic stamp, render the narrative extremely interesting. The characters, which are agreeably diversified, are conceived and drawn with propriety, and supported with spirit. The whole is written with great ease, and command of language. From this commendation, however, we must except the character of a son of Neptune, whose manners are rather those of a rough, uneducated country 'Squire, than those of a genuine sea-captain.

. . . . . .]

Chessington, *June* 18.

Here I am, and here I have been this age; though too weak to think of journalising;[3] however, as I never had so many curious anecdotes to record, I will not—at least this year, the first of my appearing in public—give up my favourite old hobby-horse.

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[1] The *Critical Review* did not notice the book until September.

[2] Dr. William Kenrick, 1725-79, the "Kenrick" of Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, ll. 86 and 115, and the "envious Kenrick" of Macaulay's Essay on Mme. D'Arblay, 1843. This, and the following review, have been verified from the originals.

[3] She had just recovered from inflammation of the lungs, and had come to Chessington to recruit.

I came hither the first week in May. My recovery from that time to this has been slow and sure, but as I could walk hardly three yards in a day at first, I found so much time to spare that I could not resist treating myself with a little private sport with *Evelina*, a young lady whom, I think, I have some right to make free with. I had promised *Hetty*[1] that *she* should read it to Mr. Crisp,[2] at her own particular request; but I wrote my excuses and introduced it myself.

I told him it was a book which Hetty had taken to Brompton to divert my cousin Richard during his confinement. He was so indifferent about it that I thought he would not give himself the trouble to read it, and often embarrassed me by unlucky questions, such as, "If it was reckoned clever?" and "What I thought of it?" and "Whether folks laughed at it?" I always evaded any direct or satisfactory answer, but he was so totally free from any idea of suspicion that my perplexity escaped his notice.

At length he desired me to begin reading to him. I dared not trust my voice with the little introductory ode, for as *that* is no romance, but the sincere effusion of my heart, I could as soon read aloud my own letters, written in my own name and character: I therefore skipped it, and have so kept the book out of his sight that, to this day, he knows not it is there. Indeed, I have since heartily repented that I read *any* of the book to him, for I found it a much more awkward thing than I had expected: my voice quite faltered when I began it, which, however, I passed off for the effect of remaining weakness of lungs, and, in short, from an invincible embarrassment, which I could not for a page together repress, the book, by my reading, lost all manner of spirit.

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[1] Esther or Hetty Burney, Fanny's elder sister, at this time married to Charles Rousseau Burney of Worcester, her cousin, and a musician.

[2] Samuel Crisp, see Editor's Introduction, p. 10.

Nevertheless, though he has by no means treated it with the praise so lavishly bestowed upon it from other quarters, I had the satisfaction to observe that he was even greedily eager to go on with it, so that I flatter myself the *story* caught his attention: and, indeed, allowing for my *mauling* reading, he gave it quite as much credit as I had any reason to expect. But, now that I was sensible of my error in being my own mistress of the ceremonies, I determined to leave to Hetty the third volume, and therefore pretended I had not brought it. He was in a delightful ill humour about it, and I enjoyed his impatience far more than I should have done his forbearance. Hetty, therefore, when she comes, has undertaken to bring it.

. . . . . .

I have had a visit from my beloved Susy, who, with my mother and little Sally,[1] spent a day here, to my no small satisfaction; and yet I was put into an embarrassment, of which I even yet know not what will be the end, during their short stay: for Mr. Crisp, before my mother, very innocently said to Susan, "Oh, pray Susette, do send me the third volume of *Evelina*; Fanny brought me the two first on purpose, I believe, to tantalise me."

I felt myself in a ferment; and Susan, too, looked foolish, and knew not what to answer. As I sat on the same sofa with him, I gave him a gentle shove, as a token, which he could not but understand, that he had said something wrong—

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[1] Sarah Harriet Burney, Dr. Burney's daughter by his second wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Allen.

though I believe he could not imagine *what.* Indeed, how should he?

My mother instantly darted forward, and repeated, "*Evelina*—what's that, pray?"

Again I *jolted* Mr. Crisp, who, very much perplexed, said, in a boggling manner, that it was a novel—he supposed from the circulating library—"only a trumpery novel."

Ah, my dear daddy! thought I, you would have devised some other sort of speech, if you knew all! —but he was really, as he well might be, quite at a loss for what I *wanted* him to say.

["You have had it here, then, have you?" continued my mother.

"Yes—two of the volumes," said Mr. Crisp.

"What! had you them from the library?" asked my mother.

"No, ma'am," answered I, horribly frightened, "from my sister."

The truth is, the books are Susan's, who bought them the first day of publication; but I did not dare own that, as it would have been almost an acknowledgment of all the rest.

She asked some further questions, to which we made the same sort of answers, and then the matter dropped. Whether it rests upon her mind or not I cannot tell.

Susan and I were next forced to exert our wits for some excuse to Mr. Crisp for my checking him.]

Two days after I received from Charlotte a letter, the most interesting that could be written to me, for it acquainted me that my dear father was, at length, reading my book, which has now been published six months.

How this has come to pass I am yet in the dark; but it seems the very moment almost that my mother and Susan and Sally left the house, he desired Charlotte to bring him the *Monthly Review*;

she contrived to look over his shoulder as he opened it, which he did at the account of *Evelina; or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World.* He read it with great earnestness, then put it down; and presently after snatched it up, and read it again. Doubtless his paternal heart felt some agitation for his girl in reading a review of her publication!—how he got at the name I cannot imagine.

Soon after he turned to Charlotte, and bidding her come close to him, he put his finger on the word *Evelina*, and saying, *she knew what it was*, bade her write down the name, and send the man to Lowndes, as if for herself. This she did, and away went William.

[He then told Charlotte that he had never known the name of it till the day before. 'Tis strange how he got at it. He added that I had come off vastly well in this review, except for the *Captain.*[1] Charlotte told him it had also been in Kenrick's review, and he desired her to copy out for him what was said in both of them. He asked her, too, whether I had mentioned the work was by *a lady*?]

When William returned he took the books from him, and the moment he was gone, opened the first volume—and opened it upon the *ode*!

How great must have been his astonishment at seeing himself so addressed! Indeed, Charlotte says, he looked all amazement, read a line or two with great eagerness, and then, stopping short, he seemed quite affected, and the tears started into his eyes: dear soul! I am sure they did into mine, nay, I even sobbed, as I read the account.

I believe he was obliged to go out before he advanced much further. But the next day I had a letter from Susan, in which I heard that he had begun reading it with Lady Hales and Miss Coussmaker,[1] and that they liked it vastly!

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[1] See last lines of review on p. 28, referring to Captain Mirvan of *Evelina*.

Lady Hales spoke of it very innocently, in the highest terms, declaring she was sure it was written by somebody in high life, and that it had all the marks of real genius! She added, "he must be a man of great abilities!"

[How ridiculous! but Miss Coussmaker was a *little* nearer the truth, for she gave it as *her* opinion that the writer was a *woman*, for she said there was such a remarkable delicacy in the conversations and descriptions, notwithstanding the grossness and vulgarity of some of the characters, and that all oaths and indelicate words were so carefully, yet naturally avoided, that she could not but suspect the writer was a female; but, she added, notwithstanding the preface declared that the writer never would be known, she hoped, if the book circulated, as she expected it would, *he* or *she* would be tempted to make a discovery.

Ha! ha! ha! that's my answer.] They little think how well they are already acquainted with the writer they so much honour! Susan begged to have, then, my father's *real* and *final* opinion;—and it is such as I almost blush to write, even for my own private reading; but yet is such as I can by no means suffer to pass unrecorded, as my whole journal contains nothing so grateful to me. I will copy his own words, according to Susan's solemn declaration of their authenticity.

"Upon my word, I think it the best novel I know, excepting Fielding's, and, in some respects, *better* than his! I have been excessively pleased with it; there are, perhaps, a few things that might have been otherwise. Mirvan's trick upon Lovel is, I think, carried too far,—there is something even disgusting in it: however, this instance excepted, I protest I think it will scarce bear an improvement. The language is as good as anybody need write—I declare as good as I would *wish* to read. Lord Orville's character is just what it should be; perfectly benevolent and upright; and there is a *boldness* in it that struck me mightily, for he is a man not *ashamed* of being better than the rest of mankind. Evelina is in a new style, too, so perfectly innocent and natural; and the scene between her and her father, Sir John Belmont, is a scene for a tragedy! I blubbered at it, and Lady Hales and Miss Coussmaker are not yet recovered from hearing it; it made them quite ill: it is, indeed, wrought up in a most extraordinary manner!"

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[1] Lady Hales was the widow of Sir Thomas Pym Hales, Bt., sometime M.P. for Dover. He died in 1773. Miss Catherine Coussmaker was her daughter by a previous marriage.

This account delighted me more than I can express. How little did I dream of ever being so much honoured! But the approbation of all the world put together, would not bear any competition, in my estimation, with that of my beloved father.

He told Susan that Lady H——[1] had bought her set, and that he heard Lady Radnor had bought another. So *Evelina* is still *travelling in the great world*!

Soon after this communication my sister Hetty came hither to spend a few days. Mr. Crisp almost immediately asked her for the third volume of *Evelina*, but as she had not time to stay and read it, she pretended that it was lent to Mrs. ——. While she was with us, though fortunately when I was not present, he asked her if anybody had yet been named or suspected for the author. "No," she said, "but that it *took vastly*," and she praised it very freely, and he assented to all she said.

What will all this come to?—where will it end?

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[1] Hales.

and when, and how, shall I wake from the vision of such splendid success? for I hardly know how to believe it real.

Well, I cannot but rejoice that I published the book, little as I ever imagined how it would fare; for hitherto it has occasioned me no small diversion, and *nothing* of the disagreeable sort. But I often think a change *will* happen, for I am by no means so sanguine as to suppose such success will be uninterrupted. Indeed, in the midst of the greatest satisfaction that I feel, an inward *something* which I cannot account for, prepares me to expect a reverse; for the more the book is drawn into notice, the more exposed it becomes to criticism and remark.

. . . . . .

Miss F. Burney to Dr. Burney

Chessington, *Friday, July* 25, 1778.

My dear and most kind Father—The request you have condescended to make me I meant to anticipate in my last letter. How good you are to pave the way for my secrets being favourably received, by sparing your *own* time and breath to gain the book attention and partiality! I can't express a third part of either the gratitude or pleasure I feel upon hearing from Susy, that you are reading it aloud to my mother; because I well know nothing can give it so good a chance with her.

Will you tell, or shall I write to my mother? I believe she will not be *all* surprise, for I fancy she is not totally without suspicion; but pray be so kind as to tell her, that it was not want of confidence in *her*, but in *myself*, that occasioned my reserve and privacy. She knows how severe a critic I think her, and therefore I am sure cannot wonder I should dread a lash which I had no other hope of escaping from, but flight or disguise. Indeed, the thoughts of "hot rolls and butter in July" could not have a more indelicate effect on my Lord Ogleby,[1] than those had upon me which followed the news of *Evelina's* visit to St. Martin's Street.

However, Susan comforts me with assurances that things are in a pretty good way; and therefore I am willing to flatter myself that, hearing who is the writer will rather serve to blunt than to sharpen the edge of criticism. I am sure it does with *you*, or your patience and precious time could never wade through three volumes of that sort; and I encourage myself, in regard to my mother, with the knowledge that no person's feelings will be so likely to prove infectious to her as yours. She must not be angry if I own I heartily hope she will not escape the contagion.

My mother will the sooner pardon my privacy, when she hears that even from *you* I used every method in my power to keep my trash concealed, and that I even yet know not in what manner you got at the name of it. Indeed, I only proposed, like my friends the Miss *Branghtons*, a little "private fun," and never once dreamt of extending my confidence beyond my sisters.

As to Mrs. Thrale[2]—your wish of telling *her* quite *unmans* me; I shook so, when I read it, that, had anybody been present, I must have betrayed myself; and, indeed, many of my late letters have given me such extreme surprise and perturbation, that I believe nothing could have saved me from Mr. Crisp's discernment, had he seen me during my first reading. However, he has not an idea of the kind.

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[1] *The Clandestine Marriage*, 1766, Act ii. (p. 26).

[2] Mrs. Thrale, *née* Hester Lynch Salusbury, 1741-1821, soon to be Miss Burney's fast friend. Dr. Burney was music-master to Mrs. Thrale' eldest daughter.

But, if you do tell Mrs. Thrale, won't she think it strange where I can have kept company, to describe such a family as the Branghtons, Mr. Brown, and some others? Indeed (thank Heaven!), I don't myself recollect ever passing half an hour at a time with any *one* person *quite* so bad; so that, I am afraid she will conclude I must have an innate vulgarity of ideas, to assist me with such coarse colouring for the objects of my imagination. Not that I suppose the book would be better received by her, for having characters very pretty, and all alike. My only fear, in regard to that particular, is for poor Miss Bayes!—If I were able to "insinuate the plot into the boxes,"[1] I should build my defence upon Swift's maxim, that "a nice man is a man of nasty ideas."[2] I should certainly have been more finical, had I foreseen what had happened, or had the most remote notion of being known by Mrs. Thrale for the scribe. However, 'tis perhaps as well as it is; for these kind of compositions lose all their spirit if they are too scrupulously corrected: besides, if I had been very nice, I must have cleared away so much, that, like poor Mr. Twiss[3] after his friends had been so obliging as to give his book a scourge, nothing but humdrum matter of fact would be left.

Adieu, my dearest sir. Pray give my duty to my mother, and pray let her know, after the *great gun* is gone off, that I shall anxiously wait to hear her opinion: and believe me ever and ever, your dutiful and most affectionate,

FRANCESCA SCRIBLERUS.

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[1] *The Rehearsal*, 1672, Act. I. Sc. i., the reference being to the "printed Papers" in which Dryden explained the plot of the *Indian Emperor*, 1667.

[2] This—scarcely a "maxim"—is one of Swift's *Thoughts on Various Subjects* (Bell's *Swift's Prose Works*, 1897, i. 281).

[3] Richard Twiss, 1747-1821, whose *Travels through Portugal and Spain* were published in 1775.

Journal resumed

July 25.—Mrs. Cholmondeley[1] has been reading and praising *Evelina*, and my father is quite delighted at her approbation, and told Susan that I could not have had a greater compliment than making two such women my friends as Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Cholmondeley, for they were severe and knowing, and afraid of praising *à tort et à travers*, as their opinions are liable to be quoted.

Mrs. Thrale said she had only to complain it was too short. She recommended it to my mother to read!—how droll!—and she told her she would be much entertained with it, for there was a great deal of human life in it, and of the manners of the present times, and added it was written "by somebody who knows the top and the bottom, the highest and the lowest of mankind."[2] She has even lent her set to my mother, who brought it home with her!

By the way, I have again resumed my correspondence with my friend Mr. Lowndes. When I sent the errata I desired to have a set, directed to Mr. Grafton, at the Orange Coffee-House; for I had no copy but the one he sent me to make the errata from, which was incomplete and unbound. However, I heard nothing at all from him; and therefore, after some consideration, and much demur, I determined to make an attempt once more; for my father told me it was a shame that I, the author, should not have even one set of my own work; I ought, he said, to have had six; and indeed, he is often quite enraged that Lowndes gave no more for the MS.—but I was satisfied—and that sufficed.

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[1] Mary, the sister of Margaret or "Peg" Woffington, the actress. She married the Hon. and Rev. Robert Cholmondeley.

[2] *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 238. The story of *Evelina* is told at length in chap. iii. of *Fanny Burney* (Men of Letters Series), 1903, pp. 61-87.

I therefore wrote him word, that I supposed, in the hurry of his business, and variety of his concerns, he had forgotten my request, which I now repeated. [I also added, that if ever the book went through another edition, I should be glad to have timely notice, as I had some corrections and alterations to propose.]

I received an immediate answer, and intelligence from my sisters, that he had sent a set of *Evelina*, most elegantly bound. The answer I will copy.

[FLEET STREET, *July* 2, 1778.

SIR—I bound up a set for you the first day I had them, and hoped by some means to hear from you. The Great World send here to buy *Evelina*. A polite lady said, "Do, Mr. Lowndes, give me *Evelina*. I am treated as unfashionable for not having read it." I think the impression will be sold by Christmas. If meantime, or about that time, you favour me with any commands, I shall be proud to observe them.—Your obliged servant,

T. LOWNDES.

To MR. GRAFTON.]

MISS F. BURNEY TO MISS S. BURNEY

CHESSINGTON, *July* 5, 1778.

MY DEAREST SUSY—Don't you think there must be some wager depending among the little curled imps who hover over us mortals, of how much flummery goes to turn the head of an authoress? Your last communication very near did my business; for, meeting Mr. Crisp ere I had composed myself, I "tipt him such a touch of the heroics" as he has not seen since the time when I was so much celebrated for dancing "Nancy

Dawson."[1] I absolutely longed to treat him with one of Captain Mirvan's frolics, and to fling his wig out of the window. I restrained myself, however, from the apprehension that they would imagine I had a universal spite to that harmless piece of goods, which I have already been known to treat with no little indignity. He would fain have discovered the reason of my skittishness; but as I could not tell it him, I was obliged to assure him it would be lost time to inquire further into my flights, since "true no meaning puzzles more than wit,"[2] and therefore, begging the favour of him to "set me down an *ass*," I suddenly retreated.

My dear, dear Dr. Johnson! what a charming man you are![3] Mrs. Cholmondeley, too, I am not merely prepared but determined to admire; for really she has shown so much penetration and sound sense of late, that I think she will bring about a union between Wit and Judgment, though their separation has been so long, and though their meetings have been so few.

But, Mrs. Thrale! she—she is the goddess of my idolatry! What an *éloge* is hers!—an *éloge* that not only delights at first, but proves more and more flattering every time it is considered![4]

I often think, when I am counting my laurels, what a pity it would have been had I popped off in my last illness, without knowing what a person of consequence I was!—and I sometimes think that, were I now to have a relapse, I could never go off with so much *éclat*! I am now at the summit of a high hill; my prospects on one side are bright, glowing, and invitingly beautiful; but when I turn round, I perceive, on the other side, sundry caverns, gulphs, pits, and precipices, that, to look at, make my head giddy and my heart sick. I see about me, indeed, many hills of far greater height and sublimity; but I have not the strength to attempt climbing them; if I move, it must be downwards. I have already, I fear, reached the pinnacle of my abilities, and therefore to stand still will be my best policy.

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[1] A hornpipe in the *Beggar's Opera*, called after a famous dancer, who died in 1767 (see *post*, Mr. Crisp's letter of January 1779).

[2] Pope, *Of the Characters of Women*, 1735, l. 114.

[3] Fanny had already seen Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-84) in March 1777, when he had visited her home in St. Martin's Street, and she had now heard from her sister Susan that he had been speaking of *Evelina* to Mrs. Thrale (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 234, 235).

[4] See *ante*, p. 38.

But there is nothing under heaven so difficult to do. Creatures who are formed for motion *must* move, however great their inducements to forbear. The wisest course I could take, would be to bid an eternal adieu to writing; then would the cry be, "'Tis pity she does not go on!—she might do something better by and by," etc., etc. *Evelina*, as a first and a youthful publication, has been received with the utmost favour and lenity; but would a future attempt be treated with the same mercy?—no, my dear Susy, quite the contrary; there would not, indeed, be the same plea to save it; it would no longer be a young lady's *first* appearance in public; those who have met with less indulgence would all peck at any second work; and even those who most encouraged the first offspring might prove enemies to the second, by receiving it with expectations which it could not answer: and so, between either the friends or the foes of the eldest, the second would stand an equally bad chance, and a million of flaws which were overlooked in the former would be ridiculed as villainous and intolerable blunders in the latter.

But, though my eyes ache as I strain them to look forward, the temptations before me are almost irresistible; and what you have transcribed from Mrs. Thrale may, perhaps, prove my destruction.

So you wish to have some of the sayings of the folks here about *the book*? I am sure I owe you all the communications I can possibly give you; but I have nothing new to offer, for the same strain prevails here as in town; and no one will be so obliging to me as to put in a little abuse: so that I fear you will be satiated with the sameness of people's remarks. Yet, what can I do? If they *will* be so disagreeable and tiresome as to be all of one mind, how is it to be helped? I can only advise you to follow my example, which is, to accommodate my philosophy to their insipidity; and in this I have so wonderfully succeeded, that I hear their commendations not merely with patience, but even with a degree of pleasure! Such, my dear Susy, is the effect of true philosophy.

You desire Kitty Cooke's[1] remarks in particular. I have none to give you, for none can I get. To the serious part she indeed listens, and seems to think it may possibly be very fine; but she is quite lost when the Branghtons and Madame Duval are mentioned; she hears their speeches very composedly, and as words of course; but when she hears them followed by loud bursts of laughter from Hetty, Mr. Crisp, Mrs. Gast,[2] and Mr. Burney,[3] she stares with the gravest amazement, and looks so aghast, and so distressed to know where the joke can be, that I never dare trust myself to look at her for more than an instant. Were she to speak her thoughts, I am sure she would ask why such common things, that pass every day, should be printed? And all the derision with which the party in general treat the Branghtons, I can see she feels herself, with a plentiful addition of astonishment, for the *author*!

By the way, not a human being here has the most remote suspicion of the fact; I could not be more secure, were I literally unknown to them. And there is no end to the ridiculous speeches perpetually made to me, by all of them in turn, though quite by accident.

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[1] See Editor's Introduction, p. 11. [2] *Ibid.* p. 11.

[3] Charles Rousseau Burney, Hetty's husband.

"A'n't you sorry this sweet book is done?" said Mrs. Gast.

A silly little laugh was the answer.

"Ah!" said Patty, "'tis the sweetest book!—don't you think so, Miss Burney?"

N.B.—Answer as above.

"Pray, Miss Fan," says Mrs. Hamilton,[1] "who wrote it?"

"Really I never heard."

'Cute enough that, Miss Sukey!

I desired Hetty to miss the verses; for I can't sit them: and I have been obliged to hide the first volume ever since, for fear of a discovery. But I don't know how it will end; for Mrs. Gast has declared she shall buy it, to take to Burford with her.

From the Same to the Same

Chessington, *Sunday, July* 6, 1778.

Your letter, my dearest Susan, and the enclosed one from Lowndes, have flung me into such a vehement perturbation, that I hardly can tell whether I wake or dream, and it is even with difficulty that I can fetch my breath. I have been strolling round the garden three or four times, in hopes of regaining a little quietness. However, I am not very angry at my inward disturbance, though it even exceeds what I experienced from the *Monthly Review.*

My dear Susy, what a wonderful affair has this been, and how extraordinary is this torrent of success, which sweeps down all before it! I often think it too much, nay, almost wish it would happen to some other person, who had more ambition, whose hopes were more sanguine, and who could less have borne to be buried in the oblivion which I even sought. But though it might have been better bestowed, it could by no one be more gratefully received.

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[1] See Editor's Introduction, p. 11.

Indeed I can't help being grave upon the subject; for a success so really unexpected almost overpowers me. I wonder at myself that my spirits are not more elated. I believe half the flattery I have had would have made me madly merry; but *all* serves only to almost depress me by the fulness of heart it occasions.

. . . . . .

I have been serving Daddy Crisp a pretty trick this morning. How he would rail if he found it all out! I had a fancy to dive pretty deeply into the real rank in which he held my book; so I told him that your last letter acquainted me who was reported to be the author of *Evelina*. I added that it was a profound secret, and he must by no means mention it to a human being. He bid me tell him directly, according to his usual style of command—but I insisted upon his guessing.

"I can't guess," said he; "maybe it is *you*!"

Thought I, what do you mean by that?

"Pooh, nonsense!" cried I, "what should make you think of me?"

"Why, you look guilty," answered he.

This was a horrible home stroke. Thought I—I shall owe them a grudge for this! however, I found it was a mere random shot, and, without much difficulty, I laughed it to scorn.

And who do you think he guessed next?—My father!—there's for you! and several questions he asked me, whether he had lately been shut up much, and so on. And this was not all—for he afterwards guessed Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Greville.[1]

There's honour and glory for you! I assure you I grinned prodigiously.

He then would guess no more. So I served him another trick for his laziness. I read a paragraph in your last letter (which, perhaps, you may not perfectly remember), in which you say the private report is, that the author is a son of the late Dr. Friend, my likeness.

Now this son is a darling of my daddy's, who reckons him the most sensible and intelligent young man of his acquaintance; so I trembled *a few*, for, I thought, ten to one but he'd say—"He?—not he—I promise you!" But no such thing—his immediate answer was: "Well, he's very capable of that or anything else."

I grinned broader than before.

And here the matter rests. I shan't undeceive him, at least till he has finished the book.

Journal resumed

July 20.—I have had a letter from my beloved father—the kindest, sweetest letter in the world! He tells me too, that he found Mrs. Thrale full of *Ma foi's* jokes, the Captain's brutality, Squire Smith's gentility, Sir Clement's audaciousness, the Branghtons' vulgarity, and Mother Selwyn's sharp knife, etc., etc. He then says, that he wishes to tell Lady Hales, though she cannot be made more fond of the book by a personal partiality for the author. He concludes with: "I never heard of a novel writer's statue—yet, who knows?—but above all things take care of your head; if that should be at all turned out of its place by all this intoxicating success, what a figure would you cut upon a pedestal—*prenez y bien garde*!"

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[1] Mrs. Greville (see Editor's Introduction, p. 10) was Fanny's godmother.

Well may he caution me!—but, as I have told him in answer, if I were to make so ungrateful, so sinful a return for the favours of fortune, as to be ridiculously vain, I should think all this success, charming as it is, bought much too dear.

I have also had a letter from Susanne. She informs me that my father, when he took the books back to Streatham, actually acquainted Mrs. Thrale with my secret. He took an opportunity, when they were alone together, of saying that upon her recommendation, he had himself, as well as my mother, been reading *Evelina*.

"Well!" cried she, "and is it not a very pretty book? and a very clever book? and a very comical book?"

"Why," answered he, "'tis well enough; but I have something to tell you about it."

"Well? what?" cried she; "has Mrs. Cholmondeley found out the author?"

"No," returned he, "not that I know of; but I believe *I* have, though but very lately."

"Well, pray let's hear!" cried she eagerly, "I want to know him of all things."

How my father must laugh at the *him*! He then, however, undeceived her in regard to that particular, by telling her it was "*our Fanny*!" for she knows all about all our family, as my father talks to her of his domestic concerns without any reserve.

A hundred handsome things, of course, followed; and she afterwards read some of the comic parts to Dr. Johnson, Mr. Thrale, and whoever came near her. How I should have quivered had I been there! but they tell me that Dr. Johnson laughed as heartily as my father himself did.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the scenes in which I am almost perpetually engaged. Mr. Crisp, who is totally without suspicion, says, almost daily, something that has double the meaning he intends to convey; for, as I am often writing, either letters, Italian, or some of my own vagaries, he commonly calls me the scribe, and the authoress; asks when I shall print; says he will have all my works on royal paper, etc.; and the other day Mrs. Gast, who frequently lectures me about studying too hard, and injuring my health, said—

"Pray, Miss Burney, now you write so much, when do you intend to publish?"

"Publish?" cried Mr. Crisp, "why, she *has* published; she brought out a book the other day that has made a great noise—*Evelina*,—and she bribed the reviewers to speak well of it, and set it a-going."

I was almost ready to run out of the room; but, though the hit was so palpable in regard to the book, what he said of the reviewers was so much the contrary that it checked my alarm: indeed, had he the most remote idea of the truth, he would be the last man to have hinted at it before a roomful of people.

["Oh!" cried I, as composedly as I could, "that is but a small part of my authorship—I shall give you a list of my folios soon."

They had all some jocularity upon the occasion, but I found I was perfectly safe; indeed, my best security is, that my daddy (*i.e.* Crisp) concludes the author to be a man, and all the rest follow as he leads.

Mr. Burney yesterday, after dinner, said—"Gentlemen and ladies, I'll propose a toast": then, filling his glass, he drank to "The author of *Evelina*."

Had they known the author was present they could not have more civilly accepted the toast; it was a bold kind of drollery in Mr. Burney, for I was fain to drink my own health in a bumper, which he filled for me, laughing heartily himself.]

August 3.—I have an immensity to write. Susan has copied me a letter which Mrs. Thrale has written to my father, upon the occasion of returning my mother two novels by Madame Riccoboni.[1] It is so honourable to me, and so sweet in her, that I must copy it for my faithful journal.

Wednesday, 22 [*July*], 1778,
STREATHAM.

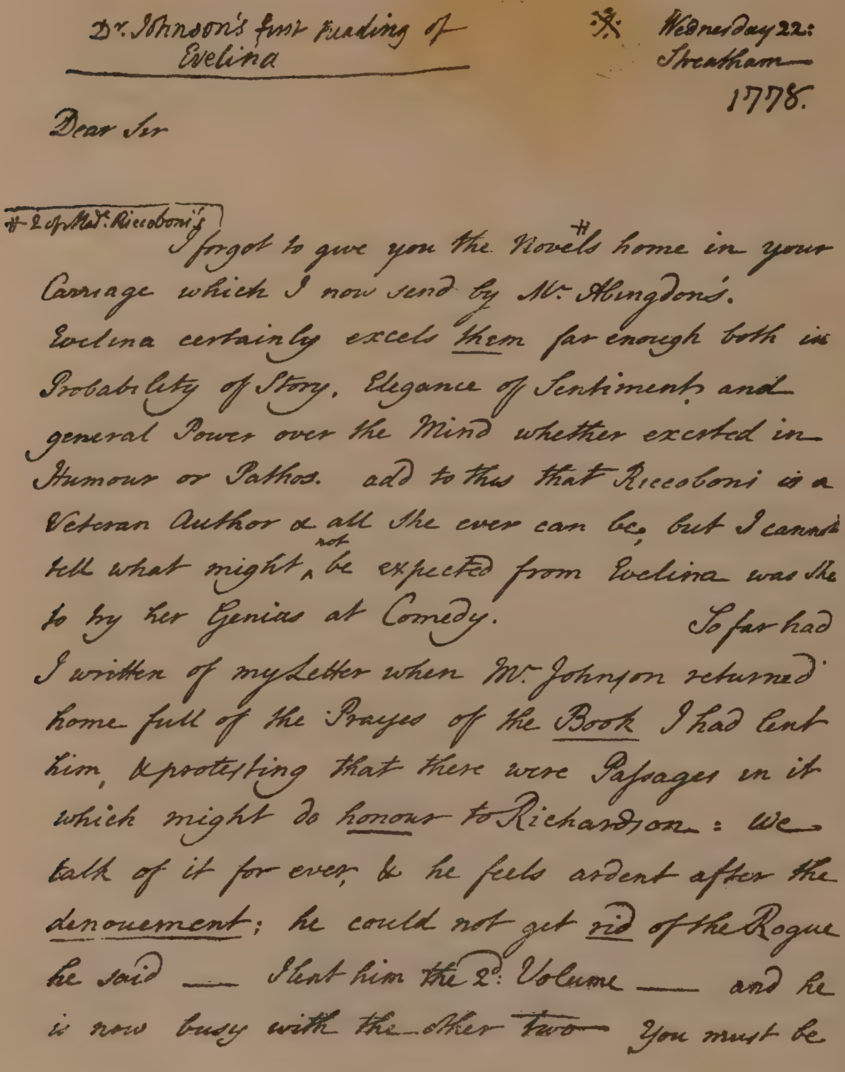
"DEAR SIR—I forgot to give you the novels home in your carriage which I now send by Mr. Abingdon's. *Evelina* certainly excels *them* far enough, both in probability of story, elegance of sentiment, and general power over the mind, whether exerted in humour or pathos. Add to this, that Riccoboni is a veteran author, and all she ever can be; but I cannot tell what might not be expected from *Evelina*, was she to try her genius at Comedy. So far had I written of my letter, when Mr. Johnson returned home, full of the praises of the *Book* I had lent him, and protesting there were passages in it which might do *honour* to Richardson. We talk of it for ever, and he feels ardent after the *dénouement*; he could not get *rid* of the Rogue, he said! I lent him the second volume, and he is now busy with the other two (*sic*). You must be more a philosopher, and less a father, than I wish you, not to be pleased with this letter;—and the giving such pleasure yields to nothing but receiving it. Long,

---

[1] Marie-Jeanne de Heurles de Laboras, Mme. Riccoboni, died 1792, translated Fielding's *Amelia* and Kelly's *False Delicacy* into French, and continued Marivaux's *Marianne*. She wrote several sentimental novels, one of which was translated as *Lady Catesby's Letters*.

FACSIMILE

Of Mrs Thrale's Letter to Dr. Burney as to *Evelina*, July 22, 1778



Dr. Johnson's first reading of
Evelina

* Wednesday 22:
Streatham —
1778.

Dear Sir

# 2 of Mad. Riccoboni's

I forgot to give you the Novels# home in your
Carriage which I now send by Mr. Abingdon's.
Evelina certainly excels them far enough both in
Probability of Story, Elegance of Sentiment, and
general Power over the Mind whether exerted in
Humour or Pathos. add to this that Riccoboni is a
Veteran Author & all She ever can be, but I cannot
tell what might not be expected from Evelina was she
to try her Genius at Comedy. So far had
I written of my Letter when Mr. Johnson returned
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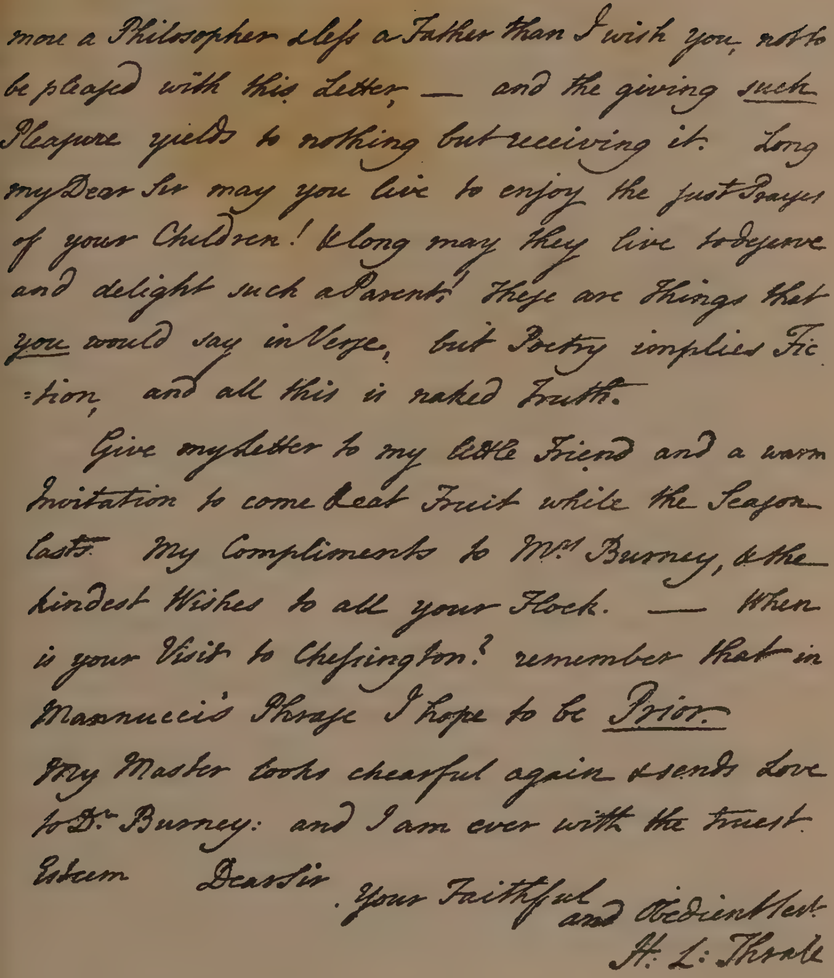
he said — I lent him the 2d. Volume — and he
is now busy with the other ~~two~~ You must be



more a Philoſopher & leſs a Father than I wish you, not to be pleaſed with this Letter, — and the giving such Pleaſure yields to nothing but receiving it. Long my Dear Sir may you live to enjoy the just Praiſes of your Children! & long may they live to deſerve and delight such a Parent! Theſe are Things that you would say in Verſe, but Poetry implies Fic-tion, and all this is naked Truth.

Give my Letter to my little Friend and a warm Invitation to come & eat Fruit while the Seaſon lasts. My Compliments to Mrs Burney, & the kindest Wishes to all your Flock. — When is your Visit to Cheſsington? remember that in Mannucci's Phraſe I hope to be Prior.
My Master looks chearful again & sends Love to Dr Burney: and I am ever with the truest Esteem Dear Sir. Your Faithful and Obedient Servt
H: L: Thrale

my Dear Sir, may you live to enjoy the just praises of your children! and long may they live to deserve and delight such a parent! These are things that you would say in verse; but Poetry implies Fiction, and all this is naked truth.

Give my letter to my little friend, and a warm invitation to come and eat fruit while the season lasts. My Compliments to Mrs. Burney, and kindest wishes to all your flock, etc."[1]

[How sweet, how amiable in this charming woman is her desire of making my dear father satisfied with his scribbler's attempt! I do, indeed, feel the most grateful love for her.]

But Dr. Johnson's approbation!—it almost crazed me with agreeable surprise—it gave me such a flight of spirits, that I danced a jig to Mr. Crisp, without any preparation, music, or explanation—to his no small amazement and diversion.[2] I left him, however, to make his own comments upon my friskiness, without affording him the smallest assistance.

Susan also writes me word, that when my father went last to Streatham Dr. Johnson was not there, but Mrs. Thrale told him, that when he gave her the first volume of *Evelina*, which she had lent him, he said, "Why, madam, why, what a charming book you lent me!" and eagerly inquired for the rest. He was particularly pleased with the Snow-hill scenes, and said that Mr. Smith's vulgar gentility was admirably portrayed; and when Sir Clement joins them, he said there was a shade of character prodigiously well marked. Well may it be said, that the greatest minds are ever the most candid to the inferior set! I think I should love Dr. Johnson for such lenity to a poor mere worm in literature, even if I were not myself the identical grub he has obliged.

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[1] The above version of this important letter is based directly upon the autograph (see *facsimile* at p. 48); but it follows Mrs. Barrett in omitting a few irrelevant words at the close.

[2] The scene of this impromptu performance, as she told Sir Walter Scott, forty-eight years afterwards (*Journal*, 1891, i. 309), was a mulberry tree in the garden at Chessington.

Susan has sent me a little note which has really been less pleasant to me, because it has alarmed me for my future concealment. It is from Mrs. Williams, an exceeding pretty poetess, who has the misfortune to be blind, but who has, to make some amends, the honour of residing in the house of Dr. Johnson: for though he lives almost wholly at Streatham, he always keeps his apartments in town, and this lady acts as mistress of his house.[1]

"*July* 25.

"Mrs. Williams sends compliments to Dr. Burney, and begs he will intercede with Miss Burney to do her the favour to lend her the reading of *Evelina*."

[I was quite confounded at this request, which proves that Mrs. Thrale has told Dr. Johnson of my secret, and that he has told Mrs. Williams, and that she has told the person whoever it be, whom she got to write the note.

I instantly scrawled a hasty letter to town to entreat my father would be so good as to write to her, to acquaint her with my earnest and unaffected desire to remain unknown.

And yet] I am frightened at this affair, I am by no means insensible to the honour which I receive from the certainty that Dr. Johnson must have spoken very well of the book, to have induced Mrs. Williams to send to our house for it. [She has known my father indeed for some years, but not with any intimacy; and I never saw her, though the perusal of her poems has often made me wish to be acquainted with her.]

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[1] Anna Williams, 1706-83. She had lived with Dr. Johnson from 1752. Her *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse* were published in 1766.

I now come to last Saturday evening, when my beloved father came to Chessington, in full health, charming spirits, and all kindness, openness, and entertainment.

[I inquired what he had done about Mrs. Williams. He told me he went to her himself at my desire, for if he had written she could not herself have read the note. She apologised very much for the liberty she had taken, and spoke highly of the book, though she had only heard the first volume, as she was dependent upon a lady's good nature and time for hearing any part of it; but she went so far as to say that "his daughter was certainly the first writer, in that way, now living!"]

In his way hither he had stopped at Streatham, and he settled with Mrs. Thrale that he would call on her again in his way to town, and carry me with him! and Mrs. Thrale said, "We all long to know her."

I have been in a kind of twitter ever since, for there seems something very formidable in the idea of appearing as an authoress! I ever dreaded it, as it is a title which must raise more expectations than I have any chance of answering. Yet I am highly flattered by her invitation, and highly delighted in the prospect of being introduced to the Streatham society.

She sent me some very serious advice to write for the theatre, as, she says, I so naturally run into conversations, that *Evelina* absolutely and plainly points out that path to me; and she hinted how much she should be pleased to be "honoured with my confidence."

My dear father communicated this intelligence, and a great deal more, with a pleasure that almost surpassed that with which I heard it, and he seems quite eager for me to make another attempt. He desired to take upon himself the communication to my daddy Crisp, and as it is now in so many hands that it is possible accident might discover it to him, I readily consented.

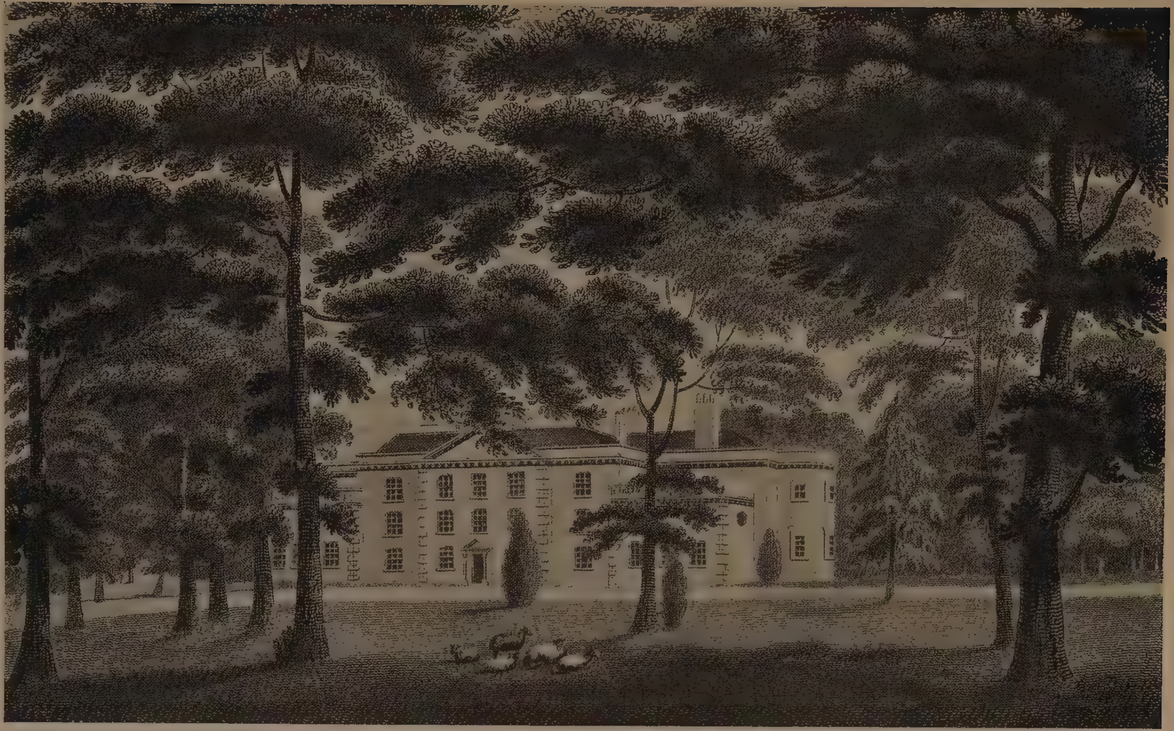
Sunday evening, as I was going into my father's room I heard him say, "The variety of characters—the variety of scenes—and the language—why she has had very little education but what she has given herself,—less than any of the others!" and Mr. Crisp exclaimed, "Wonderful—it's wonderful!"

I now found what was going forward, and therefore deemed it most fitting to decamp.

About an hour after, as I was passing through the hall, I met my daddy (Crisp). His face was all animation and archness; he doubled his fist at me, and would have stopped me, but I ran past him into the parlour.

Before supper, however, I again met him, and he would not suffer me to escape; he caught both my hands, and looked as if he would have looked me through, and then exclaimed, "Why you little hussy,—you young devil!—an't you ashamed to look me in the face, you *Evelina*, you! Why, what a dance have you led me about it! Young friend, indeed! Oh you little hussy, what tricks have you served me!"

I was obliged to allow of his running on with these gentle appellations for I know not how long, ere he could sufficiently compose himself after his great surprise, to ask or hear any particulars; and then, he broke out every three instants with exclamations of astonishment at how I had found time to write so much unsuspected, and how and where I had picked up such various materials; and not a few times did he, with me, as he had with my father, exclaim, "Wonderful!"



Streatham Place, 1787

He has, since, made me read him all my letters upon this subject. He said Lowndes would have made an estate had he given me £1000 for it, and that he ought not to have given less! "You have nothing to do now," continued he, "but to take your pen in hand, for your fame and reputation are made, and any bookseller will snap at what you write."

I then told him that I could not but really and unaffectedly regret that the affair was spread to Mrs. Williams and her friends.

"Pho," said he, "if those who are proper judges think it right that it should be known, why should you trouble yourself about it? You have not spread it, there can be no imputation of vanity fall to your share, and it cannot come out more to your honour than through such a channel as Mrs. Thrale."

London, August.—I have now to write an account of the most consequential day I have spent since my birth: namely, my Streatham visit.

Our journey to Streatham was the least pleasant part of the day, for the roads were dreadfully dusty, and I was really in the fidgets from thinking what my reception might be, and from fearing they would expect a less awkward and backward kind of person than I was sure they would find.

Mr. Thrale's house[1] is white, and very pleasantly situated, in a fine paddock. Mrs. Thrale was strolling about, and came to us as we got out of the chaise.

["Ah," cried she, "I hear Dr. Burney's voice! And you have brought your daughter?—well, now you are good!"]

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[1] Streatham Place no longer exists, having been pulled down in 1863. Its site was the southern side of the lower common between Streatham and Tooting.

She then received me, taking both my hands, and with mixed politeness and cordiality welcoming me to Streatham. She led me into the house, and addressed herself almost wholly for a few minutes to my father, as if to give me an assurance she did not mean to regard me as a show, or to distress or frighten me by drawing me out. Afterwards she took me upstairs, and showed me the house, and said she had very much wished to see me at Streatham, and should always think herself much obliged to Dr. Burney for his goodness in bringing me, which she looked upon as a very great favour.

But though we were some time together, and though she was so very civil, she did not *hint* at my book, and I love her much more than ever for her delicacy in avoiding a subject which she could not but see would have greatly embarrassed me.

When we returned to the music-room we found Miss Thrale was with my father.[1] Miss Thrale is a very fine girl, about fourteen years of age, but cold and reserved, though full of knowledge and intelligence.

Soon after, Mrs. Thrale took me to the library; she talked a little while upon common topics, and then, at last, she mentioned *Evelina.*

"Yesterday at supper," said she, "we talked it all over, and discussed all your characters; but Dr. Johnson's favourite is Mr. Smith. He declares the fine gentleman *manqué* was never better drawn; and he acted him all the evening, saying he was 'all for the ladies!' He repeated whole scenes by heart. I declare I was astonished at him. Oh you can't imagine how much he is pleased with the book; he 'could not get rid of the rogue,' he told me. But was it not droll," said she, "that I should recommend it to Dr. Burney? and tease him, so innocently, to read it?"

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[1] Hester Maria, Mrs. Thrale's eldest daughter, 1764-1857. Johnson called her "Queenie," after Queen Esther. She was married in 1808 to George Keith Elphinstone, Admiral and Viscount Keith. Miss Burney had already seen her at St. Martin's Street in March 1777 (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 153).

I now prevailed upon Mrs. Thrale to let me amuse myself, and she went to dress. I then prowled about to choose some book, and I saw, upon the reading-table, *Evelina.* — I had just fixed upon a new translation of Cicero's *Lælius*[1] when the library-door was opened, and Mr. Seward[2] entered. I instantly put away my book, because I dreaded being thought studious and affected. He offered his service to find anything for me, and then, in the same breath, ran on to speak of the book with which I had myself "favoured the world!"

The exact words he began with I cannot recollect, for I was actually confounded by the attack; and his abrupt manner of letting me know he was *au fait* equally astonished and provoked me. How different from the delicacy of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale!

When we were summoned to dinner, Mrs. Thrale made my father and me sit on each side of her. I said that I hoped I did not take Dr. Johnson's place; for he had not yet appeared.

"No," answered Mrs. Thrale, "he will sit by you, which I am sure will give him great pleasure."

Soon after we were seated, this great man entered. I have so true a veneration for him, that the very sight of him inspires me with delight and reverence, notwithstanding the cruel infirmities to which he is subject; for he has almost perpetual convulsive movements, either of his hands, lips, feet, or knees, and sometimes of all together.[1]

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[1] *Lælius: an Essay on Friendship*, by Marcus Tullius Cicero. With remarks by William Melmoth, Esq., 1777.

[2] William Seward, 1747-99, an amiable and accomplished valetudinarian (Mrs. Thrale said "hypochondriac"). He was the son of a rich brewer (Calvert and Seward), but a man of literary tastes, a friend of Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, and a member of the Essex Club. Miss Burney had already seen him at St. Martin's Street (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 153) in 1777. He wrote the *Drossiana* in the *European Magazine* for 1789, afterwards the basis of his *Anecdotes of some Distinguished Persons*, 5 vols., 1795-97, and *Biographiana*, 2 vols., 1799. T. J. Mathias, who, in the *Pursuits of Literature*, 7th ed., 1798, p. 120, dubs Seward a "publick bagman," nevertheless prefers him to "every compiler of anecdotes, except the Hon. Mr. Horace Walpole, now Lord Orford" (Note, dated 1796).

Mrs. Thrale introduced me to him, and he took his place. We had a noble dinner, and a most elegant dessert. Dr. Johnson, in the middle of dinner, asked Mrs. Thrale what was in some little pies that were near him.

"Mutton," answered she, "so I don't ask you to eat any, because I know you despise it."

"No, madam, no," cried he; "I despise nothing that is good of its sort; but I am too proud now to eat of it. Sitting by Miss Burney makes me very proud to-day!"

"Miss Burney," said Mrs. Thrale, laughing, "you must take great care of your heart if Dr. Johnson attacks it; for I assure you he is not often successless."

"What's that you say, madam?" cried he; "are you making mischief between the young lady and me already?"

A little while after he drank Miss Thrale's health and mine, and then added:

"'Tis a terrible thing that we cannot wish young ladies well, without wishing them to become old women!"

"But some people," said Mr. Seward, "are old and young at the same time, for they wear so well that they never look old."

"No, sir, no," cried the Doctor, laughing; "that never yet was; you might as well say they are at the same time tall and short. I remember an epitaph to that purpose, which is in——"

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[1] "His mouth is almost constantly opening and shutting as if he was chewing. He has a strange method of frequently twisting his fingers, and twisting his hands. His body is in continual agitation, *see-sawing* up and down; his feet are never a moment quiet; and, in short, his whole person is in *perpetual motion*" (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 154).

(I have quite forgot what,—and also the name it was made upon, but the rest I recollect exactly:)

"—— lies buried here;
So early wise, so lasting fair,
That none, unless her years you told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old."

Mrs. Thrale then repeated some lines in French, and Dr. Johnson some more in Latin. An epilogue of Mr. Garrick's to *Bonduca*[1] was then mentioned, and Dr. Johnson said it was a miserable performance, and everybody agreed it was the worst he had ever made.

"And yet," said Mr. Seward, "it has been very much admired; but it is in praise of English valour, and so I suppose the subject made it popular."

"I don't know, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "anything about the subject, for I could not read on till I came to it; I got through half a dozen lines, but I could observe no other subject than eternal dulness. I don't know what is the matter with David; I am afraid he is grown superannuated, for his prologues and epilogues used to be incomparable."

"Nothing is so fatiguing," said Mrs. Thrale, "as the life of a wit: he and Wilkes[2] are the two oldest men of their ages I know; for they have both worn themselves out, by being eternally on the rack to give entertainment to others."

"David, madam," said the Doctor, "looks much older than he is; for his face has had double the business of any other man's; it is never at rest; when he speaks one minute, he has quite a different countenance to what he assumes the next; I don't believe he ever kept the same look for half an hour together, in the whole course of his life; and such an eternal, restless, fatiguing play of the muscles, must certainly wear out a man's face before its real time."

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[1] A tragedy, altered from Beaumont and Fletcher by George Colman the Elder; and acted at the Haymarket in July 1778. Garrick's Prologue (not Epilogue) is printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, and in the *Annual Register* for 1778, pp. 199-210.

[2] John Wilkes, 1727-97, the politician.

"Oh yes," cried Mrs. Thrale, "we must certainly make some allowance for such wear and tear of a man's face."

The next name that was started, was that of Sir John Hawkins:[1] and Mrs. Thrale said, "Why now, Dr. Johnson, he is another of those whom you suffer nobody to abuse but yourself; Garrick is one, too; for if any other person speaks against him, you browbeat him in a minute!"

"Why, madam," answered he, "they don't know when to abuse him, and when to praise him; I will allow no man to speak ill of David that he does not deserve; and as to Sir John, why really I believe him to be an honest man at the bottom: but to be sure he is penurious, and he is mean, and it must be owned he has a degree of brutality, and a tendency to savageness, that cannot easily be defended."

We all laughed, as he meant we should, at this curious manner of speaking in his favour, and he then related an anecdote that he said he knew to be true in regard to his meanness. He said that Sir John and he once belonged to the same club, but that as he eat no supper after the first night of his admission, he desired to be excused paying his share.[2]

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[1] Sir John Hawkins, 1719-89, author, like Dr. Burney, of a *History of Music*, 5 vols., 1776. Judging from the character of him given by Johnson (whose Life Hawkins wrote in 1787) and from the account given of him in Prior's *Life of Edmond Malone*, 1860, pp. 425-27, he can hardly have been an agreeable man. His penuriousness is exemplified by his charging coach hire as Johnson's executor.

[2] The club referred to was probably the Ivy Lane Club, which met every Tuesday at the King's Head in Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, from

"And was he excused?"

"Oh yes; for no man is angry at another for being inferior to himself! we all scorned him, and admitted his plea. For my part I was such a fool as to pay my share for wine, though I never tasted any. But Sir John was a most *unclubable* man!"

[How delighted was I to hear this master of languages so unaffectedly and sociably and good-naturedly make words, for the promotion of sport and good-humour.]

"And this," continued he, "reminds me of a gentleman and lady with whom I travelled once; I suppose I must call them gentleman and lady, according to form, because they travelled in their own coach and four horses. But at the first inn where we stopped, the lady called for—a pint of ale! and when it came, quarrelled with the waiter for not giving full measure. — Now, Madame Duval[1] could not have done a grosser thing!"

Oh, how everybody laughed! and to be sure I did not glow at all, nor munch fast, nor look on my plate, nor lose any part of my usual composure! But how grateful do I feel to this dear Dr. Johnson, for never naming me and the book as belonging one to the other, and yet making an allusion that showed his thoughts led to it, and, at the same time, that seemed to justify the character as being natural! But, indeed, the delicacy I met with from him, and from all the Thrales, was yet more flattering to me than the praise with which I have heard they have honoured my book.

After dinner, when Mrs. Thrale and I left the gentlemen, we had a conversation that to me

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1749 to 1756. But Hawkins was also a member of the famous Literary Club.

[1] A character in *Evelina*, originally a waitress at a tavern.

could not but be delightful, as she was all good-humour, spirits, sense and *agreeability*.[1] Surely I may make words, when at a loss, if Dr. Johnson does.

[However I shall not attempt to write any more particulars of this day—than which I have never known a happier, because the chief subject that was started and kept up, was an invitation for me to Streatham, and a desire that I might accompany my father thither next week, and stay with them some time.]

We left Streatham at about eight o'clock, and Mr. Seward, who handed me into the chaise, added his interest to the rest, that my father would not fail to bring me again next week to stay with them some time. In short I was loaded with civilities from them all. And my ride home was equally happy with the rest of the day, for my kind and most beloved father was so happy in *my* happiness, and congratulated me so sweetly, that he could, like myself, think on no other subject: [and he told me that, after passing through such a house as that, I could have nothing to fear—meaning for my book, my honoured book.]

Yet my honours stopped not here; for Hetty, who with her *sposo*,[2] was here to receive us, told me she had lately met Mrs. Reynolds,[3] sister of Sir Joshua; and that she talked very much and very highly of a new novel called *Evelina*; though without a shadow of suspicion as to the scribbler;

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[1] Miss Burney was not first in the field, for Chaucer had used "agreeableté." The "H. E. D." has modern examples of the word from Lady Lytton and Thackeray's *Newcomes*.

[2] Charles Rousseau Burney. See *ante*, p. 42.

[3] Frances Reynolds (1729-1807), who lived with her brother. She figures in Boswell's pages as the "Renny dear" of Johnson.

I therefore pray thee, Renny dear,
  That thou wilt give to me,
With cream and sugar softened well,
  Another dish of tea,—

sang the great man, in disrespectful parody of his friend Percy's *Reliques*.

and not contented with her own praise, she said that Sir Joshua, who began it one day when he was too much engaged to go on with it, was so much caught, that he could think of nothing else, and was quite absent all the day, not knowing a word that was said to him: and, when he took it up again, found himself so much interested in it, that he sat up all night to finish it!

Sir Joshua, it seems, vows he would give fifty pounds to know the author! I have also heard, by the means of Charles, that other persons have declared they *will* find him out!

This intelligence determined me upon going myself to Mr. Lowndes, and discovering what sort of answers he made to such curious inquirers as I found were likely to address him. But as I did not dare trust myself to speak, for I felt that I should not be able to act my part well, I asked my mother to accompany me.

We introduced ourselves by buying the book, for which I had a commission from Mrs. G——. Fortunately Mr. Lowndes himself was in the shop; as we found by his air of consequence and authority, as well as his age; for I never saw him before.

The moment he had given my mother the book, she asked if he could tell her who wrote it.

"No," he answered; "I don't know myself."

"Pho, pho," said she, "you mayn't choose to tell, but you must know."

"I don't indeed, ma'am," answered he; "I have no honour in keeping the secret, for I have never been trusted. All I know of the matter is, that it is a gentleman of the other end of the town."

My mother made a thousand other inquiries, to which his answers were to the following effect: that for a great while, he did not know if it was a man or a woman; but now, he knew that much, and that he was a master of his subject, and well versed in the manners of the times.

"For some time," continued he, "I thought it had been Horace Walpole's;[1] for he once published a book in this snug[2] manner; but I don't think it is now. I have often people come to inquire of me who it is; but I suppose he will come out soon, and then, when the rest of the world knows it, I shall. Servants often come for it from the other end of the town, and I have asked them divers questions myself, to see if I could get at the author; but I never got any satisfaction."

Just before we came away, upon my mother's still further pressing him, he said, with a most important face,

"Why, to tell you the truth, madam, I have been informed that it is a piece of real secret history; and, in that case, it will never be known."

This was too much for me; I grinned irresistibly, and was obliged to look out at the shop-door till we came away.

[How many ridiculous things have I heard upon this subject! I hope that next some particular family will be fixed upon, to whom this secret history must belong! However, I am delighted to find myself so safe.]

. . . . . .

From Mr. Crisp to Miss F. Burney

August 16.

My dear Fannikin—"*If I wish to hear the sequel of the day?*" the question is injurious—both because I warmly interest myself in whatever concerns a Fannikin, and likewise that I must else be

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[1] Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* was published by Lowndes in 1764 as a translation from the Italian by William Marshal.

[2] Private, clandestine.

> duller than the fat weed
> That rots itself at ease on Lethe's wharf.[1]

The reception you met with at Streatham, though highly flattering, by no means surprises me; every article of it is most strictly your due. You have fairly earned it, and if your host and hostess had given you less, they had defrauded you. Flummery[2] is a commodity I do not much deal in; but on this occasion I will subscribe with hand and heart to what I have now written.

After what I had heard of Mr. Seward, I should not, I own, have expected such an attack as you describe from him. What a contrast between him and Mrs. Thrale!

I was once in a situation somewhat like yours, when I supped with Quin[3] at Bath, a good many years ago. There was a *fade*, empty fellow at table with us, who thought to be mighty civil to me. Quin observing I did not much relish his insipid trash, cried out, "Why, he is a grocer, man! Prythee, don't choke him with his own figs."

Mr. Seward certainly merited such a rebuff.

I desire you to be very minute in the remainder of the day, particularly with regard to Dr. Johnson, who, though single, is himself an host.

Well, the ice is now broke, and your perturbation ought to be in a great measure at an end.

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[1] *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. v. The Cambridge Shakespeare reads "roots itself in ease."

[2] Flummery, empty compliment.

[3] James Quin, the actor, a noted wit and *bon-vivant*, 1693-1766. After his retirement from the stage, he lived much at Bath, where he died, and was buried in the Abbey Church. Garrick wrote his epitaph. Smollett brings him into *Humphry Clinker* as an old friend of Matthew Bramble; and at Bath, Gainsborough painted his portrait. Another portrait, by Hogarth, formerly in the Townsend Collection, has recently (1904) been added to the National Portrait Gallery.

When you went into the sea at Teignmouth,[1] did not you shiver and shrink at first, and almost lose your breath when the water came up to your chest? I suppose you afterwards learned to plunge in boldly, over head and ears at once, and then your pain was over. You must do the like now; and as the public have thought proper to put you on a cork jacket, your fears of drowning would be unpardonable. S. C.

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[1] Miss Burney had visited Teignmouth in 1773. Her journal to her sister Susan is printed in the *Early Diary*, 1889, i. 218 *et seq.*, and is characterised by the Editor, Mrs. Raine Ellis, as "Fanny's first book, privately circulated."

PART II

1778

Streatham Journal resumed—Character of Mr. Thrale—Dr. Johnson—Country neighbours—Bennet Langton—Character of Mrs. Thrale—Table-talk of Dr. Johnson—Eccentricities of the Cumberland family—Dr. Johnson and Richard Cumberland—More table-talk of Dr. Johnson—Anecdotes of the Cumberland family—Mrs. Montagu and Bet Flint—The female wits—Mrs. Pinkethman—Mrs. Rudd—Kitty Fisher—An election dinner—Dr. Johnson—Anecdote of his rudeness—His *Lives of the Poets*—Mrs. Charlotte Lennox—The author of *Hermes*—Learned Ladies—Johnson's opinion of them—Richardson—Fielding—Murphy—Mr. Lort—Cumberland—Seward—Chatterton—The perils of popularity—Hannah More—Dr. Johnson's harsh treatment of her.

Streatham, Sunday, Aug. 23.—I know not how to express the fulness of my contentment at this sweet place. All my best expectations are exceeded, and you know they were not very moderate. If, when my dear father comes, Susan and Mr. Crisp were to come too, I believe it would require at least a day's pondering to enable me to form another wish.

Our journey was charming. The kind Mrs. Thrale would give courage to the most timid. She did not ask me questions, or catechise me upon what I knew, or use any means to draw me out, but made it her business to draw herself out—that is, to start subjects, to support them herself, and to take all the weight of the conversation, as if it behoved her to find me entertainment. But I am so much in love with her, that I shall be obliged to run away from the subject, or shall write of nothing else.

When we arrived here, Mrs. Thrale showed me my room, which is an exceeding pleasant one, and then conducted me to the library, there to divert myself while she dressed.

Miss Thrale soon joined me: and I begin to like her. Mr. Thrale was neither well nor in spirits all day. Indeed, he seems not to be a happy man, though he has every means of happiness in his power. But I think I have rarely seen a very rich man with a light heart and light spirits.

Dr. Johnson was in the utmost good humour.

There was no other company at the house all day.

After dinner, I had a delightful stroll with Mrs. Thrale, and she gave me a list of all her "good neighbours" in the town of Streatham, and said she was determined to take me to see Mr. T——,[1] the clergyman, who was a character I could not but be diverted with, for he had so furious and so absurd a rage for building, that in his garden he had as many temples, and summer-houses, and statues as in the gardens of Stow, though he had so little room for them that they all seemed tumbling one upon another.

In short, she was all unaffected drollery and sweet good humour.

At tea we all met again, and Dr. Johnson was gaily sociable. He gave a very droll account of the children of Mr. Langton,[2]

"Who," he said, "might be very good children if they were let alone; but the father is never easy when he is not making them do something which they cannot do; they must repeat a fable, or a speech, or the Hebrew alphabet; and they might as well count twenty, for what they know of the matter: however, the father says half, for he prompts every other word. But he could not have chosen a man who would have been less entertained by such means."

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[1] In the Diary for 1780, "Mr. T——" is revealed as "Mr. Tattersall."

[2] Bennet Langton, 1737-1801, one of Johnson's best friends. He succeeded him in 1788 as Professor of Ancient Literature to the Royal Academy. Johnson thought Langton had "his children too much about him" (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iii. 128).

"I believe not!" cried Mrs. Thrale: "nothing is more ridiculous than parents cramming their children's nonsense down other people's throats. I keep mine as much out of the way as I can."

"Yours, madam," answered he, "are in nobody's way; no children can be better managed or less troublesome; but your fault is, a too great perverseness in not allowing anybody to give them anything. Why should they not have a cherry or a gooseberry as well as bigger children?"

"Because they are sure to return such gifts by wiping their hands upon the giver's gown or coat, and nothing makes children more offensive. People only make the offer to please the parents, and they wish the poor children at Jericho when they accept it."

"But, madam, it is a great deal more offensive to refuse them. Let those who make the offer look to their own gowns and coats, for when you interfere, they only wish *you* at Jericho."

"It is difficult," said Mrs. Thrale, "to please everybody."

Indeed, the freedom with which Dr. Johnson condemns whatever he disapproves, is astonishing; and the strength of words he uses would, to most people, be intolerable; but Mrs. Thrale seems to have a sweetness of disposition that equals all her other excellences, and far from making a point of vindicating herself, she generally receives his admonitions with the most respectful silence.

But I fear to say all I think at present of Mrs. Thrale, lest some flaws should appear by and by, that may make me think differently. And yet, why should I not indulge the *now*, as well as the *then*, since it will be with so much more pleasure? In short, I do think her delightful; she has talents to create admiration, good humour to excite love, understanding to give entertainment, and a heart which, like my dear father's, seems already fitted for another world. My own knowledge of her, indeed, is very little for such a character; but all I have heard, and all I see, so well agree, that I won't prepare myself for a future disappointment.

But to return. Mrs. Thrale then asked whether Mr. Langton took any better care of his affairs than formerly?

"No, madam," cried the doctor, "and never will; he complains of the ill effects of habit, and rests contentedly upon a confessed indolence. He told his father himself that he had 'no turn to economy'; but a thief might as well plead that he had 'no turn to honesty.'"

Was not that excellent?

At night, Mrs. Thrale asked if I would have anything? I answered, "No"; but Dr. Johnson said,

"Yes: she is used, madam, to suppers; she would like an egg or two, and a few slices of ham, or a rasher—a rasher, I believe, would please her better."

How ridiculous! However, nothing could persuade Mrs. Thrale not to have the cloth laid: and Dr. Johnson was so facetious, that he challenged Mr. Thrale to get drunk!

"I wish," said he, "my master would say to me,[1] Johnson, if you will oblige me, you will call for a bottle of Toulon, and then we will set to it, glass for glass, till it is done; and after that, I will say, Thrale, if you will oblige me, you will call for another bottle of Toulon, and then we will set to it, glass for glass, till that is done: and by the time we should have drunk the two bottles, we should be so happy, and such good friends, that we should fly into each other's arms, and both together call for the third!"

I ate nothing, that they might not again use such a ceremony with me. Indeed, their late dinners forbid suppers, especially as Dr. Johnson made me eat cake at tea, for he held it till I took it, with an odd or absent complaisance.

He was extremely comical after supper, and would not suffer Mrs. Thrale and me to go to bed for near an hour after we made the motion.

The Cumberland family[2] was discussed. Mrs. Thrale said that Mr. Cumberland was a very amiable man in his own house; but as a father mighty simple; which accounts for the ridiculous conduct and manners of his daughters, concerning whom we had much talk, and were all of a mind; for it seems they used the same rude stare to Mrs. Thrale that so much disgusted us at Mrs. Ord's: she says that she really concluded something was wrong, and that, in getting out of the coach, she had given her cap some unlucky cuff,—by their merciless staring.

I told her that I had not any doubt, when I had met with the same attention from them, but that they were calculating the exact cost of all my dress. Mrs. Thrale then told me that, about two years ago, they were actually hissed out of the playhouse, on account of the extreme height of their feathers!

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[1] This was the name by which (like Mrs. Trulliber in *Joseph Andrews*) Mrs. Thrale spoke of her first husband. Johnson and others caught it up; and she became known as "my mistress."

[2] Richard Cumberland, 1732-1811, the dramatist, and the "Sir Fretful Plagiary" of Sheridan's *Critic*. Miss Burney speaks of his daughters in 1779 as "the flashers of the place" at Brighton.

Dr. Johnson instantly composed an extempore dialogue between himself and Mr. Cumberland upon this subject, in which he was to act the part of a provoking condoler:

"Mr. Cumberland (I should say), how monstrously ill-bred is a playhouse mob! How I pitied poor Miss Cumberlands about that affair!"

"What affair?" cries he, for he has tried to forget it.

"Why," says I, "that unlucky accident they met with some time ago."

"Accident? what accident, sir?"

"Why, you know, when they were hissed out of the playhouse—you remember the time—oh, the English mob is most insufferable! they are boors, and have no manner of taste!"

Mrs. Thrale accompanied me to my room, and stayed chatting with me for more than an hour.

. . . . . .

Now for this morning's breakfast.

Dr. Johnson, as usual, came last into the library; he was in high spirits, and full of mirth and sport. I had the honour of sitting next to him: and now, all at once, he flung aside his reserve, thinking, perhaps, that it was time I should fling aside mine.

Mrs. Thrale told him that she intended taking me to Mr. T——'s.

"So you ought, madam," cried he; "'tis your business to be Cicerone to her."

Then suddenly he snatched my hand, and kissing it,

"Ah!" he added, "they will little think what a tartar you carry to them!"

"No, that they won't!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "Miss Burney looks so meek and so quiet, nobody would suspect what a comical girl she is; but I believe she has a great deal of malice at heart."

"Oh, she's a toad!"[1] cried the doctor, laughing—"a sly young rogue! with her Smiths and her Branghtons!"

"Why, Dr. Johnson," said Mrs. Thrale, "I hope you are very well this morning! if one may judge by your spirits and good humour, the fever you threatened us with is gone off."

He had complained that he was going to be ill last night.

"Why no, madam, no," answered he, "I am not yet well; I could not sleep at all; there I lay restless and uneasy, and thinking all the time of Miss Burney. Perhaps I have offended her, thought I; perhaps she is angry; I have seen her but once, and I talked to her of a rasher!—Were you angry?"

I think I need not tell you my answer.

"I have been endeavouring to find some excuse," continued he, "and, as I could not sleep, I got up, and looked for some authority for the word; and I find, madam, it is used by Dryden: in one of his prologues, he says—'And snatch a homely rasher from the coals.'[2] So you must not mind me, madam; I say strange things, but I mean no harm."

I was almost afraid he thought I was really idiot enough to have taken him seriously; but, a few minutes after, he put his hand on my arm, and shaking his head, exclaimed,

"Oh, you are a sly little rogue!—what a Holborn beau have you drawn!"

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[1] "Toad," "toadling," were eighteenth-century terms of familiar raillery.

[2] Prologue to *All for Love; or, The World well Lost*, 1678.

"Ay, Miss Burney," said Mrs. Thrale, "the Holborn beau is Dr. Johnson's favourite; and we have all your characters by heart, from Mr. Smith up to Lady Louisa."[1]

"Oh, Mr. Smith, Mr. Smith is the man!" cried he, laughing violently. "Harry Fielding never drew so good a character!—such a fine varnish of low politeness!—such a struggle to appear a gentleman! Madam, there is no character better drawn anywhere—in any book or by any author."

I almost poked myself under the table. Never did I feel so delicious a confusion since I was born! But he added a great deal more, only I cannot recollect his exact words, and I do not choose to give him mine.

"Come, come," cried Mrs. Thrale, "we'll torment her no more about her book, for I see it really plagues her. I own I thought for awhile it was only affectation, for I'm sure if the book were mine I should wish to hear of nothing else. But we shall teach her in time how proud she ought to be of such a performance."

"Ah, madam," cried the doctor, "be in no haste to teach her that; she'll speak no more to us when she knows her own weight."

"Oh, but, sir," cried she, "if Mr. Thrale has his way, she will become our relation, and then it will be hard if she won't acknowledge us."

You may think I stared, but she went on.

"Mr. Thrale says nothing would make him half so happy as giving Miss Burney to Sir J—— L——."[2]

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[1] Lady Louisa Larpent in *Evelina*. Mrs. Thrale sometimes called Miss Burney "Lady Louisa of Leicester Square."

[2] Sir John Lade, Thrale's nephew, then a minor. "He married a woman of the town, became a celebrated member of the Four-in-Hand Club, and contrived to waste the whole of a fine fortune before he died" (Hayward's *Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi*, 2nd ed., 1861, i. 78). Sir John Lade figures in Sir A. Conan Doyle's *Rodney Stone*, 1896. There are also some satirical verses upon him by Johnson in Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. 413.

Mercy! what an exclamation did I give. I wonder you did not hear me to St. Martin's Street. However, she continued,

"Mr. Thrale says, Miss Burney seems more formed to draw a husband to herself, by her humour when gay, and her good sense when serious, than almost anybody he ever saw."

"He does me much honour," cried I: though I cannot say I much enjoyed such a proof of his good opinion as giving me to Sir J—— L——; but Mr. Thrale is both his uncle and his guardian, and thinks, perhaps, he would do a mutual good office in securing me so much money, and his nephew a decent companion. Oh, if he knew how little I require with regard to money—how much to even bear with a companion! But he was not brought up with such folks as my father, my Daddy Crisp, and my Susan, and does not know what indifference to all things but good society such people as those inspire.

"My master says a very good speech," cried the doctor, "if Miss Burney's husband should have anything in common with herself; but I know not how we can level her with Sir J—— L——, unless she would be content to put her virtues and talents in a scale against his thousands: and poor Sir J—— must give cheating weight even then! However, if we bestow such a prize upon him, he shall settle his whole fortune on her."

Ah! thought I, I am more mercenary than you fancy me, for not even that would bribe me high enough.

Before Dr. Johnson had finished his *éloge*, I was actually on the ground, for there was no standing it,—or sitting it, rather: and Mrs. Thrale seemed delighted for me.

"I assure you," she said, "nobody can do your book more justice than Dr. Johnson does: and yet, do you remember, sir, how unwilling you were to read it? He took it up, just looked at the first letter, and then put it away, and said, 'I don't think I have any taste for it!'—but when he was going to town, I put the first volume into the coach with him; and then, when he came home, the very first words he said to me were 'Why, Madam, this Evelina is a charming creature!'—and then he teased me to know who she married, and what became of her,—and I gave him the rest. For my part, I used to read it in bed, and could not part with it: I laughed at the second, and I cried at the third; but what a trick was that of Dr. Burney's, never to let me know whose it was till I had read it! Suppose it had been something I had not liked! Oh, it was a vile trick!"

"No, madam, not at all!" cried the doctor, "for, in that case, you would never have known;—all would have been safe, for he would neither have told you who wrote it, nor Miss Burney what you said of it."

Some time after the doctor began laughing to himself, and then, suddenly turning to me, he called out, "Only think, Polly! Miss has danced with a lord!"[1]

"Ah, poor Evelina!" cried Mrs. Thrale, "I see her now in Kensington Gardens. What she must have suffered! Poor girl! what fidgets she must have been in! And I know Mr. Smith, too, very well;—I always have him before me at the Hampstead Ball, dressed in a white coat, and a tambour waistcoat,[2] worked in green silk. Poor Mr. Seward! Mr. Johnson made him so mad t'other day! 'Why, Seward,' said he, 'how smart you are dressed! why, you only want a tambour waistcoat to look like

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[1] This is a quotation from Letter liv. of *Evelina*.

[2] *i.e.* embroidered on a tambour or drum-shaped frame. This is now done efficiently by machines.

Mr. Smith!' But I am very fond of Lady Louisa; I think her as well drawn as any character in the book; so fine, so affected, so languishing; and, at the same time, so insolent!"

She then ran on with several of her speeches.

Some time after, she gave Dr. Johnson a letter from Dr. Jebb,[1] concerning one of the gardeners who is very ill. When he had read it, he grumbled violently to himself, and put it away with marks of displeasure.

"What's the matter, sir!" said Mrs. Thrale; "do you find any fault with the letter?"

"No, madam, the letter's well enough, if the man knew how to write his own name: but it moves my indignation to see a gentleman take pains to appear a tradesman. Mr. Branghton would have written his name with just such beastly flourishes."

"Ay, well," said Mrs. Thrale, "he is a very agreeable man, and an excellent physician, and a great favourite of mine, and so he is of Miss Burney's."

"Why, I have no objection to the man, madam, if he would write his name as he ought to do."

"Well, it does not signify," cried Mrs. Thrale; "but the commercial fashion of writing gains ground every day, for all Miss Burney abuses it, with her Smiths and her Branghtons. Does not the great Mr. Pennant write like a clerk,[2] without any pronouns? and does not everybody flourish their names till nobody can read them?"

After this they talked over a large party of company who are invited to a formal and grand dinner for next Monday, and among others Admiral

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[1] Richard Jebb, 1729-87, M.D., and Harveian orator and censor. He was made a baronet in this year.

[2] Pennant's writing, from a specimen dated 1796 now before us, is clear but not particularly clerical.

Montague[1] was mentioned. The doctor, turning to me, with a laugh, said,

"You must mark the old sailor, Miss Burney; he'll be a character."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Thrale, who was going out of the room, "how I wish you would hatch up a comedy between you! do, fall to work!"

A pretty proposal! to be sure Dr. Johnson would be very proud of such a fellow-labourer!

As soon as we were alone together, he said,

"These are as good people as you can be with; you can go to no better house; they are all good nature; nothing makes them angry."

As I have always heard from my father that every individual at Streatham spends the morning alone, I took the first opportunity of absconding to my own room, and amused myself in writing till I tired. About noon, when I went into the library, book hunting, Mrs. Thrale came to me.

We had a very nice confab about various books, and exchanged opinions and imitations of Baretti;[2] she told me many excellent tales of him, and I, in return, related my stories.

She gave me a long and very entertaining account of Dr. Goldsmith, who was intimately known here; but in speaking of "The Good-natured Man," when I extolled my favourite

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[1] John Montagu, 1719-95: Rear-Admiral, 1770; Commander-in-Chief on the North American Station, 1771-74; Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief at Newfoundland, 1776. James Burney, Fanny's elder brother, entered the Navy under Admiral Montagu (see Editor's Introduction, p. 5).

[2] Giuseppe Marc' Antonio Baretti, 1719-89, was a teacher of Italian and a voluminous miscellaneous writer. His friend Johnson had introduced him to the Thrales, with whom he was domesticated from 1773 to July 6, 1776, teaching Queenie Italian. By the latter date he had quarrelled with Mrs. Thrale, and left the house. He held the post of Foreign Secretary to the Royal Academy. Reynolds painted his portrait for the Thrale Gallery. It was sold in 1816 for £31 : 10s. (*Piozziana*, 1833, p. 51). Miss Burney had often seen him at St. Martin's Street, and in a letter of 1786 he calls himself her "old friend Baretti" (see also note on Baretti's *Dialogues* in 1783).

Croaker, I found that admirable character was a downright theft from Dr. Johnson. Look at the *Rambler*, and you will find Suspirius is the man, and that not merely the idea, but the particulars of the character, are all stolen thence![1]

While we were yet reading this *Rambler*, Dr. Johnson came in: we told him what we were about.

"Ah, madam!" cried he, "Goldsmith was not scrupulous; but he would have been a great man had he known the real value of his own internal resources."

"Miss Burney," said Mrs. Thrale, "is fond of his *Vicar of Wakefield*: and so am I;—don't you like it, sir?"

"No, madam, it is very faulty; there is nothing of real life in it, and very little of nature. It is a mere fanciful performance."[2]

He then seated himself upon a sofa, and calling to me, said, "Come,—Evelina,—come and sit by me."

I obeyed; and he took me almost in his arms,—that is, one of his arms, for one would go three times, at least, round me,—and, half-laughing, half-serious, he charged me to "be a good girl!"

"But, my dear," continued he with a very droll look, "what makes you so fond of the Scotch? I don't like you for that;—I hate these Scotch, and so must you. I wish Branghton had sent the dog to jail! That Scotch dog Macartney."

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Thrale, "don't you remember he says he would, but that he should get nothing by it?"

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[1] Suspirius, the Screech Owl. See *Rambler*, No. 59, for Tuesday, October 9, 1750. But Forster, *Life of Goldsmith*, Bk. iii. ch. 16, suggests that Goldsmith may also have borrowed largely from his own doleful philosopher in the *Citizen of the World*, 1762, ii. 114 (Letter lxxxix.).

[2] He was more consistent than usual on this point. "His [Goldsmith's] *Vicar*"—he told Reynolds in this year—"I myself did not think would have much success" (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iii. 321).

"Why, ay, true," cried the doctor, see-sawing very solemnly, "that, indeed, is some palliation for his forbearance. But I must not have you so fond of the Scotch, my little Burney; make your hero what you will but a Scotchman. Besides, you write Scotch—you say 'the one,'—my dear, that's not English. Never use that phrase again."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Thrale, "it may be used in Macartney's letter, and then it will be a propriety."

"No, madam, no!" cried he; "you can't make a beauty of it; it is in the third volume; put it in Macartney's letter, and welcome!—that, or anything that is nonsense."

"Why, surely," cried I, "the poor man is used ill enough by the Branghtons."

"But Branghton," said he, "only hates him because of his wretchedness,—poor fellow!—But, my dear love, how should he ever have eaten a good dinner before he came to England?"

And then he laughed violently at young Branghton's idea.

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "I always liked Macartney; he is a very pretty character, and I took to him, as the folks say."

"Why, madam," answered he, "I like Macartney myself. Yes, poor fellow, I liked the man, but I love not the nation."

And then he proceeded, in a dry manner, to make at once sarcastic reflections on the Scotch, and flattering speeches to me, for Macartney's firing at the national insults of young Branghton: his stubborn resolution in not owning, even to his bosom friend, his wretchedness of poverty; and his fighting at last for the honour of his nation, when he resisted all other provocations; he said, were all extremely well marked.

We stayed with him till just dinner time, and then we were obliged to run away and dress; but Dr. Johnson called out to me as I went—

"Miss Burney, I must settle that affair of the Scotch with you at our leisure."

At dinner we had the company, or rather the presence, for he did not speak two words, of Mr. E——, the clergyman, I believe, of Streatham. And afterwards, Mrs. Thrale took the trouble to go with me to the T——'s.

[Dr. Johnson, who has a love of social converse that nobody, without living under the same roof with him, would suspect, quite begged us not to go till he went to town; but as we were hatted and ready, Mrs. Thrale only told him she rejoiced to find him so jealous of our companies, and then away we whisked,—she, Miss Thrale, and my ladyship.]

I could write some tolerable good sport concerning this visit, but that I wish to devote all the time I can snatch for writing, to recording what passes here[; themes of mere ridicule offer everywhere].

We got home late, and had the company of Mr. E——, and of Mr. Rose Fuller, a young man who lives at Streatham, and is nephew of the famous Rose Fuller; and whether Dr. Johnson did not like them, or whether he was displeased that we went out, or whether he was not well, I know not; but he never opened his mouth, except in answer to a question, till he bid us good-night.[1]

Saturday Morning.—Dr. Johnson was again all himself; and so civil to me!—even admiring how I dressed myself! Indeed, it is well I have so much of his favour; for it seems he always speaks his mind concerning the dress of ladies, and all ladies who are here obey his injunctions implicitly, and alter whatever he disapproves. This is a part of his character that much surprises me: but notwithstanding he is sometimes so absent, and always so near sighted, he scrutinises into every part of almost everybody's appearance. They tell me of a Miss Brown, who often visits here, and who has a slovenly way of dressing. "And when she comes down in a morning," says Mrs. Thrale, "her hair will be all loose, and her cap half off; and then Dr. Johnson, who sees something is wrong, and does not know where the fault is, concludes it is in the cap, and says, 'My dear, what do you wear such a vile cap for?' 'I'll change it, sir,' cries the poor girl, 'if you don't like it.' 'Ay, do,' he says; and away runs poor Miss Brown; but when she gets on another, it's the same thing, for the cap has nothing to do with the fault. And then she wonders Dr. Johnson should not like the cap, for she thinks it very pretty. And so on with her gown, which he also makes her change; but if the poor girl were to change through all her wardrobe, unless she could put her things on better, he would still find fault."

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[1] "It is remarkable he never speaks at all, but when spoken to," she had said upon their first meeting in 1777 (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 157). And Tyers compared him to a ghost who never answered until addressed (*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, Friday, August 20, 1773).

When Dr. Johnson was gone, she told me of my mother's being obliged to change her dress.

"Now," said she, "Mrs. Burney had on a very pretty linen jacket and coat, and was going to church; but Dr. Johnson, who, I suppose, did not like her in a jacket, saw something was the matter, and so found fault with the linen: and he looked and peered, and then said, 'Why, madam, this won't do! you must not go to church so!' So away went poor Mrs. Burney and changed her gown! And when she had done so, he did not like it, but he did not know why; so he told her she should not wear a black hat and cloak in summer! Oh, how he did bother poor Mrs. Burney! and himself too, for if the things had been put on to his mind, he would have taken no notice of them."

"Why," said Mr. Thrale, very drily, "I don't think Mrs. Burney a very good dresser."

"Last time she came," said Mrs. Thrale, "she was in a white cloak, and she told Dr. Johnson she had got her old white cloak scoured on purpose to oblige him! 'Scoured!' says he, 'ay,—have you, madam?'—so he see-sawed, for he could not for shame find fault, but he did not seem to like the scouring."

[So I think myself amazingly fortunate to be approved by him; for, if he disliked, alack-a-day, how could I change! But he has paid me some very fine compliments upon this subject.

. . . . . .

I was very sorry when the doctor went to town, though Mrs. Thrale made him promise to return to Monday's dinner; and he has very affectionately invited me to visit him in the winter, when he is at home: and he talked to me a great deal of Mrs. Williams, and gave me a list of her works, and said I must visit them;—which I am sure I shall be very proud of doing.]

And now let me try to recollect an account he gave us of certain celebrated ladies of his acquaintance: an account which, had you heard from himself, would have made you die with laughing, his manner is so peculiar, and enforces his humour so originally.

It was begun by Mrs. Thrale's apologising to him for troubling him with some question she thought trifling—Oh, I remember! We had been talking of colours, and of the fantastic names given to them, and why the palest lilac should be called a *soupir étouffé*; and when Dr. Johnson came in she applied to him.

"Why, madam," said he with wonderful readiness, "it is called a stifled sigh because it is checked in its progress, and only half a colour."

I could not help expressing my amazement at his universal readiness upon all subjects, and Mrs. Thrale said to him,

"Sir, Miss Burney wonders at your patience with such stuff; but I tell her you are used to me, for I believe I torment you with more foolish questions than anybody else dares do."

"No, madam," said he, "you don't torment me;—you tease me, indeed, sometimes."

"Ay, so I do, Dr. Johnson, and I wonder you bear with my nonsense."

"No, madam, you never talk nonsense; you have as much sense, and more wit, than any woman I know!"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Thrale, blushing, "it is my turn to go under the table this morning, Miss Burney!"

"And yet," continued the doctor, with the most comical look, "I have known all the wits, from Mrs. Montagu down to Bet Flint!"[1]

"Bet Flint!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "pray who is she?"

"Oh, a fine character, madam! She was habitually a slut and a drunkard, and occasionally a thief and a harlot."

"And, for Heaven's sake, how came you to know her?"

"Why, madam, she figured in the literary world, too! Bet Flint wrote her own life, and called herself Cassandra, and it was in verse;—it began:

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[1] For Johnson's account of Bet Flint, as given to the company at Dilly's in 1781, see Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. 103.

"When Nature first ordained my birth,
A diminutive I was born on earth:
And then I came from a dark abode,
Into a gay and gaudy world.[1]

"So Bet brought me her verses to correct;[2] but I gave her half-a-crown, and she liked it as well. Bet had a fine spirit;—she advertised for a husband, but she had no success, for she told me no man aspired to her! Then she hired very handsome lodgings and a footboy; and she got a harpsichord, but Bet could not play; however, she put herself in fine attitudes, and drummed."

Then he gave an account of another of these geniuses, who called herself by some fine name, I have forgotten what.

"She had not quite the same stock of virtue," continued he, "nor the same stock of honesty as Bet Flint; but I suppose she envied her accomplishments, for she was so little moved by the power of harmony, that while Bet Flint thought she was drumming very divinely, the other jade had her indicted for a nuisance!"

"And pray what became of her, sir?"

"Why, madam, she stole a quilt from the man of the house, and he had her taken up: but Bet Flint had a spirit not to be subdued; so when she found herself obliged to go to jail, she ordered a sedan chair, and bid her footboy walk before her. However, the boy proved refractory, for he was ashamed, though his mistress was not."

"And did she ever get out of jail again, sir?"

"Yes, madam; when she came to her trial the judge acquitted her. 'So now,' she said to me, 'the quilt is my own, and now I'll make a petticoat of it.' Oh, I loved Bet Flint!"

Oh, how we all laughed! Then he gave an

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[1] Boswell gives a slightly different version. But it is not worth quoting.

[2] According to Boswell, she asked the Doctor to write a Preface.

account of another lady, who called herself Laurinda, and who also wrote verses and stole furniture; but he had not the same affection for her, he said, though she too "was a lady who had high notions of honour."

Then followed the history of another, who called herself Hortensia, and who walked up and down the park repeating a book of Virgil.

"But," said he, "though I know her story, I never had the good fortune to see her."

After this he gave us an account of the famous Mrs. Pinkethman.[1] "And she," he said, "told me she owed all her misfortunes to her wit; for she was so unhappy as to marry a man who thought himself also a wit, though I believe she gave him not implicit credit for it, but it occasioned much contradiction and ill-will."

"Bless me, sir!" cried Mrs. Thrale, "how can all these vagabonds contrive to get at *you*, of all people?"

"Oh the dear creatures!" cried he, laughing heartily, "I can't but be glad to see them!"

"Why, I wonder, sir, you never went to see Mrs. Rudd among the rest?"[2]

"Why, madam, I believe I should," said he, "if it was not for the newspapers; but I am prevented many frolics that I should like very well, since I am become such a theme for the papers."

Now would you ever have imagined this? Bet Flint, it seems, once took Kitty Fisher[3] to see him, but to his no little regret he was not at home. "And Mrs. Williams," he added, "did not love

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[1] This is probably a mistake for the notorious Mrs. *Pilkington* (Lœtitia von Lewen), 1700-50, whose *Memoirs* appeared in 1748. Her husband, the Rev. Matthew Pilkington, whom Swift first befriended, and then came to regard as "a coxcomb and a knave," answers to Johnson's description.

[2] Margaret Caroline Rudd. See *post*, under February 1787.

[3] A beautiful courtesan. Reynolds painted her as Cleopatra.

Bet Flint, but Bet Flint made herself very easy about that."

How Mr. Crisp would have enjoyed this account! He gave it all with so droll a solemnity, and it was all so unexpected, that Mrs. Thrale and I were both almost equally diverted.

Streatham, August 26.—My opportunities for writing grow less and less, and my materials more and more. After breakfast I have scarcely a moment that I can spare all day.

Mrs. Thrale I like more and more. Of all the people I have ever seen since I came into this "gay and gaudy world,"[1] I never before saw the person who so strongly resembles our dear father. I find the likeness perpetually; she has the same natural liveliness, the same general benevolence, the same rare union of gaiety and of feeling in her disposition.

And so kind is she to me! She told me at first that I should have all my mornings to myself, and therefore I have actually studied to avoid her, lest I should be in her way; but since the first morning she seeks me, sits with me, saunters with me in the park, or compares notes over books in the library; and her conversation is delightful; it is so entertaining, so gay, so enlivening, when she is in spirits, and so intelligent and instructive when she is otherwise, that I almost as much wish to record all she says, as all Dr. Johnson says.

Proceed—no! Go back, my muse, to Thursday.

Dr. Johnson came home to dinner.

In the evening he was as lively and full of wit and sport as I have ever seen him; and Mrs. Thrale and I had him quite to ourselves; for Mr. Thrale came in from giving an election dinner (to which he sent two bucks and six pine apples) so tired, that he neither opened his eyes nor mouth, but fell fast asleep. Indeed, after tea he generally does.

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[1] Cf. the quatrain, *ante*, p. 83.

Dr. Johnson was very communicative concerning his present work of the *Lives of the Poets*; Dryden is now in the press, and he told us he had been just writing a dissertation upon Hudibras.

He gave us an account of Mrs. Lenox.[1] Her *Female Quixote* is very justly admired here. But Mrs. Thrale says that though her books are generally approved, nobody likes her. I find she, among others, waited on Dr. Johnson upon her commencing writer, and he told us that, at her request, he carried her to Richardson.

"Poor Charlotte Lenox!" continued he; "when we came to the house, she desired me to leave her, 'for,' says she, 'I am under great restraint in your presence, but if you leave me alone with Richardson I'll give you a very good account of him': however, I fear poor Charlotte was disappointed, for she gave me no account at all!"

He then told us of two little productions of our Mr. Harris,[2] which we read; they are very short and very clever: one is called *Fashion*, the other *Much Ado*,[3] and they are both of them full of a sportive humour, that I had not suspected to belong to Mr. Harris, the learned grammarian.

Some time after, turning suddenly to me, he said, "Miss Burney, what sort of reading do you delight in? History?—travels?—poetry?—or romances?"

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[1] Charlotte Lenox, 1720-1804, author of the *Female Quixote*, 1752. She was befriended by most of the leading men of letters of her day.

[2] James Harris, of Salisbury, 1709-80—"a most charming old man"—the author of *Hermes*; *or, a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar*, 1751. He was also a writer upon music, and a composer (see *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 107).

[3] These are printed at the end of Sarah Fielding's *Familiar Letters between the principal Characters in David Simple*, and are there declared (in a footnote) to be "A kind Present to the Author by a Friend."

"Oh, sir!" cried I, "I dread being catechised by you. I dare not make any answer, for I fear whatever I should say would be wrong!"

"Whatever you should say—how's that?"

"Why, not whatever I should—but whatever I could say."

He laughed, and to my great relief spared me any further questions upon the subject. Indeed, I was very happy I had the presence of mind to evade him as I did, for I am sure the examination which would have followed, had I made any direct answer, would have turned out sorely to my discredit.

"Do you remember, sir," said Mrs. Thrale, "how you tormented poor Miss Brown about reading?"

"She might soon be tormented, madam," answered he, "for I am not yet quite clear she knows what a book is."

"Oh, for shame!" cried Mrs. Thrale, "she reads not only English, but French and Italian. She was in Italy a great while."

"Pho!" exclaimed he; "Italian, indeed! Do you think she knows as much Italian as Rose Fuller does English?"

"Well, well," said Mrs. Thrale, "Rose Fuller is a very good young man, for all he has not much command of language, and though he is silly enough, yet I like him very well, for there is no manner of harm in him."

Then she told me that he once said, "Dr. Johnson's conversation is so instructive that I'll ask him a question. 'Pray, sir, what is Palmyra? I have often heard of it, but never knew what it was.' 'Palmyra, sir?' said the doctor; 'why, it is a hill in Ireland, situated in a bog, and has palm-trees at the top, whence it is called Palm-mire.'"

Whether or not he swallowed this account, I know not yet.[1]

"But Miss Brown," continued she, "is by no means such a simpleton as Dr. Johnson supposes her to be; she is not very deep, indeed, but she is a sweet, and a very ingenuous girl, and nobody admired Miss Streatfield more. But she made a more foolish speech to Dr. Johnson than she would have done to anybody else, because she was so frightened and embarrassed that she knew not what she said. He asked her some question about reading, and she did, to be sure, make a very silly answer; but she was so perplexed and bewildered, that she hardly knew where she was, and so she said the beginning of a book was as good as the end, or the end as good as the beginning, or some such stuff; and Dr. Johnson told her of it so often, saying, 'Well, my dear, which part of a book do you like best now?' that poor Fanny Brown burst into tears!"

"I am sure I should have compassion for her," cried I; "for nobody would be more likely to have blundered out such, or any such speech, from fright and terror."

"You?" cried Dr. Johnson. "No; you are another thing; she who could draw Smiths and Branghtons, is quite another thing."

Mrs. Thrale then told some other stories of his degrading opinion of us poor fair sex; I mean in general, for in particular he does them noble justice. Among others, was a Mrs. Somebody who spent a day here once, and of whom he asked, "Can she read?"

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[1] Mrs. Thrale (then Mrs. Piozzi), in relating this story, after Johnson's death, in her *Anecdotes* of him, adds—"Seeing however that the lad" (whom she does not name, but calls a "young fellow") "thought him serious, and thanked him for the information, he undeceived him very gently indeed; told him the history, geography, and chronology of Tadmor in the Wilderness, with every incident that literature could furnish, I think, or eloquence express, from the building of Solomon's palace to the voyage of Dawkins and Wood." [*Mrs. Barrett's note.*]

"Yes, to be sure," answered Mrs. Thrale; "we have been reading together this afternoon."

"And what book did you get for her?"

"Why, what happened to lie in the way, Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*."[1]

"Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*! What made you choose that?"

"Why, sir, what would you have had me take?"

"What she could have understood—*Cow-hide*, or *Cinderella*!"

"Oh, Dr. Johnson!" cried I; "'tis not for nothing you are feared!"

"Oh, you're a rogue!" cried he, laughing, "and they would fear *you* if they knew you!"

"That they would," said Mrs. Thrale; "but she's so shy they don't suspect her. Miss P—— gave her an account of all her dress, to entertain her, t'other night! To be sure she was very lucky to fix on Miss Burney for such conversation! But I have been telling her she must write a comedy; I am sure nobody could do it better. Is it not true, Dr. Johnson?"

I would fain have stopt her, but she was not to be stopped, and ran on saying such fine things! though we had almost a struggle together; and she said at last:

"Well, authors may say what they will of modesty; but I believe Miss Burney is really modest about her book, for her colour comes and goes every time it is mentioned."

I then escaped to look for a book which we had been talking of, and Dr. Johnson, when I returned to my seat, said he wished Richardson had been alive.

"And then," he added, "she should have been introduced to him—though I don't know neither—Richardson would have been afraid of her."

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[1] *The Analysis of Beauty. Written with a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste*, 1753. It is not a lucid book, and must have sadly mystified "Mrs. Somebody."

"Oh yes! that's a likely matter," quoth I.

"It's very true," continued he; "Richardson would have been really afraid of her; there is merit in *Evelina* which he could not have borne. No; it would not have done! unless, indeed, she would have flattered him prodigiously. Harry Fielding, too, would have been afraid of her; there is nothing so delicately finished in all Harry Fielding's works, as in *Evelina*!" Then shaking his head at me, he exclaimed, "Oh, you little character-monger, you!"

Mrs. Thrale then returned to her charge, and again urged me about a comedy; and again I tried to silence her, and we had a fine fight together; till she called upon Dr. Johnson to back her.

"Why, madam," said he, laughing, "she *is* writing one. What a rout is here, indeed! she is writing one upstairs all the time. Who ever knew when she began *Evelina*? She is working at some drama, depend upon it."

"True, true, O king!" thought I.[1]

"Well, that will be a sly trick!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "however, you know best, I believe, about that, as well as about every other thing."

Friday was a very full day. In the morning we began talking of *Irene*,[2] and Mrs. Thrale made Dr. Johnson read some passages which I had been remarking as uncommonly applicable to the present times. He read several speeches, and told us he had not ever read so much of it before since it was first printed.

"Why, there is no making you read a play," said Mrs. Thrale, "either of your own, or any other person. What trouble had I to make you hear

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[1] She was then engaged upon *The Witlings*.

[2] Johnson's own tragedy, acted and published in 1749.

Murphy's *Know your own Mind*![1] 'Read rapidly, read rapidly,' you cried, and then took out your watch to see how long I was about it! Well, we won't serve Miss Burney so, sir; when we have her comedy we will do it all justice."

Murphy,[2] it seems, is a very great favourite here; he has been acquainted intimately with Mr. Thrale from both their boyhoods, and Mrs. Thrale is very partial to him. She told me, therefore, in a merry way, that though she wished me to excel Cumberland, and all other dramatic writers, yet she would not wish me better than her old friend Murphy. I begged her, however, to be perfectly easy, and assured her I would take care not to eclipse him!

At noon Mrs. Thrale took me with her to Kensington, to see her little daughters Susan and Sophia, who are at school there. They are sweet little girls.

When we were dressed for dinner, and went into the parlour, we had the agreeable surprise of seeing Mr. Seward there. I say agreeable, for notwithstanding our acquaintance began in a manner so extremely unpleasant to me, there is something of drollery, good sense, intelligence, and archness in this young man, that have not merely reconciled me to him, but brought me over to liking him vastly.

There was also Mr. Lort,[3] who is reckoned one of the most learned men alive, and is also a collector of curiosities, alike in literature and natural history. His manners are somewhat blunt and odd, and he is altogether out of the common road, without having chosen a better path.

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[1] A comedy, based upon *L'Irrésolu* of Néricault Destouches, acted at Covent Garden in 1777, and printed in 1778.

[2] Arthur Murphy, the author and actor, 1727-1805. Fanny had acted in his *Way to Keep Him* at her uncle's at Barborne Lodge in 1777 (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 165).

[3] Michael Lort, D.D., 1725-90, the antiquary. At this date he was chaplain to the Bishop of Peterborough, and Vicar of Bottisham, near Cambridge.

The day was passed most agreeably. In the evening we had, as usual, a literary conversation. I say we, only because Mrs. Thrale will make me take some share, by perpetually applying to me; and, indeed, there can be no better house for rubbing up the memory, as I hardly ever read, saw, or heard of any book that by some means or other has not been mentioned here.

Mr. Lort produced several curious MSS. of the famous Bristol Chatterton; among others, his will, and divers verses written against Dr. Johnson, as a placeman and pensioner; all which he read aloud, with a steady voice and unmoved countenance.

I was astonished at him; Mrs. Thrale not much pleased; Mr. Thrale silent and attentive; and Mr. Seward was slily laughing. Dr. Johnson himself, listened profoundly and laughed openly. Indeed, I believe he wishes his abusers no other thing than a good dinner, like Pope.[1]

Just as we had got our biscuits and toast-and-water, which make the Streatham supper, and which, indeed, is all there is any chance of eating after our late and great dinners, Mr. Lort suddenly said,

"Pray, ma'am, have you heard anything of a novel that runs about a good deal, called *Evelina*?"

What a ferment did this question, before such a set, put me in!

I did not know whether he spoke to me, or Mrs. Thrale; and Mrs. Thrale was in the same doubt, and as she owned, felt herself in a little palpitation for me, not knowing what might come next. Between us both, therefore, he had no answer.

"It has been recommended to me," continued he; "but I have no great desire to see it, because it has such a foolish name. Yet I have heard a great deal of it, too."

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[1] "I wish'd the man a dinner, and sat still" (*Prologue to the Satires*, 1735, l. 152).

He then repeated *Evelina*—in a very languishing and ridiculous tone.

My heart beat so quick against my stays that I almost panted with extreme agitation, from the dread either of hearing some horrible criticism, or of being betrayed: and I munched my biscuit as if I had not eaten for a fortnight.

I believe the whole party were in some little consternation; Dr. Johnson began see-sawing; Mr. Thrale awoke; Mr. E——,[1] who I fear has picked up some notion of the affair from being so much in the house, grinned amazingly; and Mr. Seward, biting his nails and flinging himself back in his chair, I am sure had wickedness enough to enjoy the whole scene.

Mrs. Thrale was really a little fluttered, but without looking at me, said,

"And pray what, Mr. Lort, what have you heard of it?"

[Now, had Mrs. Thrale not been flurried, this was the last question she should have ventured to ask before me. Only suppose what I must feel when I heard it.]

"Why, they say," answered he, "that it's an account of a young lady's first entrance into company, and of the scrapes she gets into; and they say there's a great deal of character in it, but I have not cared to look in it, because the name is so foolish—*Evelina*!"

"Why foolish, sir?" cried Dr. Johnson. "Where's the folly of it?"

"Why, I won't say much for the name myself," said Mrs. Thrale, "to those who don't know the reason of it, which I found out, but which nobody else seems to know."

She then explained the name from Evelyn, according to my own meaning.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 79.

"Well," said Dr. Johnson, "if that was the reason, it is a very good one."

"Why, have you had the book here?" cried Mr. Lort, staring.

"Ay, indeed, have we," said Mrs. Thrale; "I read it when I was last confined, and I laughed over it, and I cried over it!"

"Oh ho!" said Mr. Lort, "this is another thing! If you have had it here, I will certainly read it."

"Had it? ay," returned she; "and Dr. Johnson, who would not look at it at first, was so caught by it when I put it in the coach with him that he has sung its praises ever since,—and he says Richardson would have been proud to have written it."

"Oh ho! this is a good hearing!" cried Mr. Lort; "if Dr. Johnson can read it, I shall get it with all speed."

"You need not go far for it," said Mrs. Thrale, "for it's now upon yonder table."

I could sit still no longer; there was something so awkward, so uncommon, so strange in my then situation, that I wished myself a hundred miles off; and, indeed, I had almost choked myself with the biscuit, for I could not for my life swallow it; and so I got up, and, as Mr. Lort went to the table to look for *Evelina*, I left the room, and was forced to call for water to wash down the biscuit, which literally stuck in my throat.

I heartily wished Mr. Lort at Jerusalem. Notwithstanding all this may read as nothing, because all that was said was in my favour, yet at the time, when I knew not what might be said, I suffered the most severe trepidation.

I did not much like going back, but the moment I recovered breath I resolved not to make bad worse by staying longer away: but at the door of the room I met Mrs. Thrale, who, asking me if I would have some water, took me into a back room, and burst into a hearty fit of laughter.

"This is very good sport!" cried she; "the man is as innocent about the matter as a child, and we shall hear what he says to it to-morrow at breakfast. I made a sign to Dr. Johnson and Seward not to tell him."

When she found I was not in a humour to think it such good sport as she did, she grew more serious, and, taking my hand, kindly said—

"May you never, Miss Burney, know any other pain than that of hearing yourself praised! and I am sure *that* you must often feel."

[When I told her how much I dreaded being discovered, and besought her not to betray me any further, she again began laughing, and openly declared she should not consult me about the matter. I was really uneasy — nay, quite uncomfortable,—for the first time I have been so since I came thither, but as we were obliged soon to return, I could not then press my request with the earnestness I wished. But she told me that as soon as I had left the room when Mr. Lort took up *Evelina*, he exclaimed contemptuously, "Why, it's printed for Lowndes!" and that Dr. Johnson then told him there were things and characters in it more than worthy of Fielding.

"Oh ho!" cried Mr. Lort, "what, is it better than Fielding?"

"Harry Fielding," answered Dr. Johnson, "knew nothing but the shell of life."

"So you, ma'am," added the flattering Mrs. Thrale, "have found the kernel."

Are they all mad? or do they want to make me so?]

When we returned, to my great joy, they were talking of other subjects, yet I could not sufficiently recover myself the whole evening to speak one word but in answer; [for the dread of the criticisms which Mr. Lort might innocently make the next day, kept me in a most uncomfortable state of agitation.]

When Mrs. Thrale and I retired, she not only, as usual, accompanied me to my room, but stayed with me at least an hour, talking over the affair. I seized with eagerness this favourable opportunity of conjuring her not merely not to tell Mr. Lort my secret, but ever after never to tell anybody. For a great while she only laughed, saying—

"Poor Miss Burney! so you thought just to have played and sported with your sisters and cousins, and had it all your own way; but now you are in for it! But if you will be an author and a wit, you must take the consequences!"

But when she found me seriously urgent and really frightened, she changed her note, and said,

"Oh, if I find you are in earnest in desiring concealment, I shall quite scold you; for if such a desire does not proceed from affectation, 'tis from something worse."

"No, indeed," cried I, "not from affectation; for my conduct has been as uniform in trying to keep snug as my words, and I never have wavered: I never have told anybody out of my own family, nor half the bodies in it. And I have so long forborne making this request to you for no other reason in the world but for fear you should think me affected."

"Well, I won't suspect you of affectation," returned she—"nay, I can't, for you have looked like your namesake in the *Clandestine Marriage*[1] all this evening, 'of fifty colours, I wow and purtest'; but when I clear you of that, I leave something worse."

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[1] A famous old comedy by the elder Colman and Garrick, 1766, in which one of the characters is named Fanny. It is very frequently quoted by Miss Burney, in whose family it was a favourite. Mrs. Thrale is echoing the vulgar Mrs. Heidelberg of the play.

"And what, dear madam, what can be worse?"

"Why, an over-delicacy that may make you unhappy all your life. Indeed you must check it—you must get the better of it: for why should you write a book, print a book, and have everybody read and like your book, and then sneak in a corner and disown it!"

"My printing it, indeed," said I, "tells terribly against me to all who are unacquainted with the circumstances that belonged to it, but I had so little notion of being discovered, and was so well persuaded that the book would never be heard of, that I really thought myself as safe, and meant to be as private, when the book was at Mr. Lowndes's, as when it was in my own bureau."

"Well, I don't know what we shall do with you! But indeed you must blunt a little of this delicacy, for the book has such success, that if you don't own it, somebody else will!"

Yet notwithstanding all her advice, and all her encouragement, I was so much agitated by the certainty of being known as a scribbler, that I was really ill all night and could not sleep.

When Mrs. Thrale came to me the next morning, she was quite concerned to find I had really suffered from my panics.

"Oh, Miss Burney," cried she, "what shall we do with you? This must be conquered; indeed this delicacy must be got over."

"Don't call it delicacy," cried I, "when I know you only think it folly."

"Why, indeed," said she, laughing, "it is not very wise!"

"Well," cried I, "if, indeed, I am in for it, why I must seriously set about reconciling myself—yet I never can!"

"We all love you," said the sweet woman, "we all love you dearly already; but the time will come when we shall all be proud of you—so proud, we shall not know where to place you! You must set about a comedy; and set about it openly; it is the true style of writing for you: but you must give up all these fears and this shyness; you must do it without any disadvantages; and we will have no more of such sly, sneaking, private ways!"

[I told her of my fright while at Chessington concerning Mrs. Williams, and of the letter I wrote to beg my father would hasten to caution her.

"And did he?" said she.

"Oh yes! directly."

"Oh, fie! I am ashamed of him! how can he think of humouring you in such maggots? If the book had not been liked, I would have said nothing to it. But it is a sweet book, and the great beauty of it is that it reflects back all our own ideas and observations; for everybody must have met with some thing similar to almost all the incidents."]

In short, had I been the child of this delightful woman, she could not have taken more pains to reconcile me to my situation: even when she laughed, she contrived, by her manner, still to reassure or to soothe me.

[We went down together. My heart was in my mouth as we got to the library, where all the gentlemen were waiting. I made Mrs. Thrale go in before me.

Mr. Lort was seated close to the door, *Evelina* in his hand. Mrs. Thrale began with asking how he found it?—I could not, if my life had depended on it, I am sure I could not, at that moment, have followed her in, and therefore, I skipped into the music-room.

However foolish all this may seem, the foolery occasioned me no manner of fun, for I was quite in an agony. However, as I met with Miss Thrale, in a few minutes we went into the library together.]

Dr. Johnson was later than usual this morning, and did not come down till our breakfast was over, and Mrs. Thrale had risen to give some orders, I believe: I, too, rose, and took a book at another end of the room. Some time after, before he had yet appeared, Mr. Thrale called out to me,

"So, Miss Burney, you have a mind to feel your legs before the doctor comes?"

"Why so?" cried Mr. Lort.

"Why, because when he comes she will be confined."

"Ay?—how is that?"

"Why, he never lets her leave him, but keeps her prisoner till he goes to his own room."

"Oh, ho!" cried Mr. Lort, "she is in great favour with him."

"Yes," said Mr. Seward, "and I think he shows his taste."

"I did not know," said Mr. Lort, "but he might keep her to help him in his *Lives of the Poets*, if she's so clever."

"And yet," said Mrs. Thrale, "Miss Burney never flatters him, though she is such a favourite with him;—but the tables are turned, for he sits and flatters her all day long."

"I don't flatter him," said I, "because nothing I could say would flatter him."

Mrs. Thrale then told a story of Hannah More, which I think exceeds, in its severity, all the severe things I have yet heard of Dr. Johnson's saying.

When she was introduced to him, not long ago, she began singing his praise in the warmest manner, and talking of the pleasure and the instruction she had received from his writings, with the highest encomiums. For some time he heard her with that quietness which a long use of praise has given him: she then redoubled her strokes, and, as Mr. Seward calls it, peppered still more highly[1]: till, at length, he turned suddenly to her, with a stern and angry countenance, and said, "Madam, before you flatter a man so grossly to his face, you should consider whether or not your flattery is worth his having."[2]

Mr. Seward then told another instance of his determination not to mince the matter, when he thought reproof at all deserved. During a visit of Miss Brown's to Streatham, he was inquiring of her several things that she could not answer; and, as he held her so cheap in regard to books, he began to question her concerning domestic affairs,—puddings, pies, plain work, and so forth. Miss Brown, not at all more able to give a good account of herself in these articles than in the others, began all her answers with, "Why, sir, one need not be obliged to do so,—or so," whatever was the thing in question. When he had finished his interrogatories, and she had finished her "need nots," he ended the discourse with saying, "As to your needs, my dear, they are so very many, that you would be frightened yourself if you knew half of them."

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[1] "Who pepper'd the highest was sure to please."
Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, l. 112.

[2] Boswell also tells this story. See pp. 341, 342, and notes in Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. See also *post*, p. 119.

PART III

1778

Anecdotes of Johnson—A dinner at Streatham—Sir Joshua Reynolds—Mystification—Dr. Calvert—Mrs. Cholmondeley—Edmund Burke—His opinion of *Evelina*—Mrs. Montagu—Dr. Johnson's household—A collection of oddities—A poor scholar—The *Lives of the Poets*—Visit of Mrs. Montagu to Streatham—Johnson's opinion of her—Character of Johnson's conversation—His compliments and rebuffs—Table-talk of Johnson, Mrs. Montagu, and Mrs. Thrale—The value of critical abuse—Dr. Johnson's severe speeches—"Civil for four"—Dr. Johnson and Goldsmith—Dr. Jebb—Match-making—Critics and authors—Letter from Mr. Crisp—Mr. Seward—A grand dinner at Streatham—High heels—Table-talk—The distinctions of rank—*Irene*—Hannah More—Her play—Letter from Mr. Crisp—How to write a comedy.

AFTER breakfast on Friday, or yesterday, a curious trait occurred of Dr. Johnson's jocosity. It was while the talk ran so copiously upon their urgency that I should produce a comedy. While Mrs. Thrale was in the midst of her flattering persuasions, the doctor, see-sawing in his chair, began laughing to himself so heartily as to almost shake his seat as well as his sides. We stopped our confabulation, in which he had ceased to join, hoping he would reveal the subject of his mirth; but he enjoyed it inwardly, without heeding our curiosity,—till at last he said he had been struck with a notion that "Miss Burney would begin her dramatic career by writing a piece called 'Streatham.'"

He paused, and laughed yet more cordially, and then suddenly commanded a pomposity to his countenance and his voice, and added, "Yes! 'Streatham—a Farce!'"

[How little did I expect from this Lexiphanes, this great and dreaded lord of English literature, a turn for burlesque humour.]

Streatham, September. — Our journey hither proved, as it promised, most sociably cheerful, and Mrs. Thrale opened still further upon the subject she began in St. Martin's Street,[1] of Dr. Johnson's kindness towards me. To be sure she saw it was not totally disagreeable to me; though I was really astounded when she hinted at my becoming a rival to Miss Streatfield in the doctor's good graces.

"I had a long letter," she said, "from Sophy Streatfield[2] t'other day, and she sent Dr. Johnson her elegant edition of the 'Classics'; but when he had read the letter, he said, 'She is a sweet creature, and I love her much; but my little Burney writes a better letter.' Now," continued she, "that is just what I wished him to say of you both."

[Mr. Thrale came out to the door, and received me with more civility than ever; indeed we are beginning to grow a little acquainted.]

We had no company all day; but Mr. Thrale, being in much better spirits than when I was here last, joined in the conversation, and we were mighty

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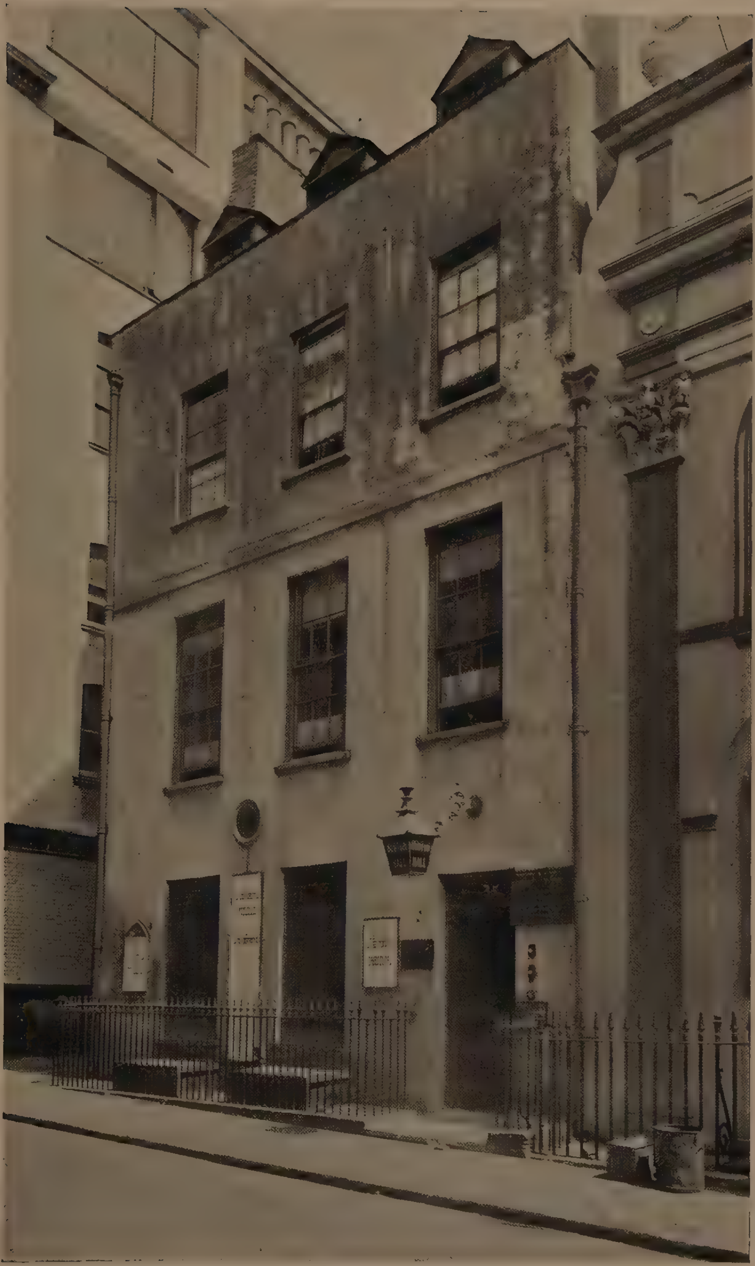
[1] That is to say, at No. 1 St. Martin's Street, to which the Burneys had moved from Queen Square, Bloomsbury, early in 1774. The house, which still exists as No. 35, had formerly been Sir Isaac Newton's. He lived in it from 1710 to 1725. At the top was a small-paned wooden turret with a leaden roof, which passed for his observatory, and has long since disappeared. Fanny used this occasionally as her *scriptorium* (*Early Diary*, 1889, i. 304).

[2] Miss Sophia Streatfield of Tunbridge Wells was a beauty; and like Miss Elizabeth Carter, a Greek scholar.

> Smiling Streatfield's iv'ry neck,
> Nose and notions—*à la Grecque*,

are celebrated in the *Morning Herald* for March 12, 1782. She often appears hereafter in Fanny's pages.



No. 35 St. Martin's Street, 1904

agreeable. But he has taken it into his head to insist upon it that I am a spouter.[1] To be sure I can't absolutely deny the fact; but yet I am certain he never had any reason to take such a notion. However, he has repeatedly asked me to read a tragedy to him, and insists upon it that I should do it marvellous well; and when I ask him why, he says I have such a marking face. However, I told him I would as soon act to Mr. Garrick, or try attitudes to Sir Joshua Reynolds, as read to anybody at Streatham.

The next morning, after church, I took a stroll round the grounds, and was followed by Miss Thrale, with a summons into the parlour, to see Miss Brown. I willingly obeyed it, for I wished much to have a peep at her.

She is very like the Duchess of Devonshire, only less handsome; and, as I expected, seems a gay, careless, lively, good-humoured girl. She came on horseback, and stayed but a short time.

Our Monday's intended great party was very small, for people are so dispersed at present in various quarters, that nothing is more difficult than to get them together. In the list of invitations were included Mr. Garrick, Sir Richard Jebb,[2] Mr. Lort, Mr. Seward, Miss Brown, and Mr. Murphy, —all of whom were absent from town: we had therefore, only Sir Joshua Reynolds,[3] the two Miss Palmers,[4] Dr. Calvert, Mr. Rose Fuller, and Lady Ladd.[5] Dr. Johnson did not return.

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[1] A reader or reciter. Murphy's *Apprentice*, 1756, was aimed at the so-called *Spouting Clubs*. Miss Burney had a weak voice, and was not a good reader. At p. 30 she refers to her "*mauling* reading," though, to be sure, in this case, there was reason for embarrassment.

[2] See *ante*, p. 75.

[3] Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1723-92, was a neighbour of the Burneys at St. Martin's Street. His house was in Leicester Fields, No. 47.

[4] Sir Joshua's nieces. Mary, the elder (1750-1820), became in 1792 Marchioness of Thomond; Theophila, "Offy" or "Offie" (1756-1848), married Mr. R. L. Gwatkin in 1783. Reynolds painted them both.

[5] Lady Lade was the sister of Mr. Thrale, and the mother of Sir John Lade (see *ante*, p. 72). She had been handsome and was very tall.

Sir Joshua I am much pleased with: I like his countenance, and I like his manners, the former I think expressive, soft, and sensible; the latter gentle, unassuming, and engaging.

The eldest Miss Palmer seems to have a better understanding than Offy; but Offy has the most pleasing face. Dr. Calvert[1] I did not see enough of to think about.

The dinner, in quantity as well as quality, would have sufficed for forty people. Sir Joshua said, when the dessert appeared, "Now if all the company should take a fancy to the same dish, there would be sufficient for all the company from any one."

After dinner, as usual, we strolled out: I ran first into the hall for my cloak, and Mrs. Thrale, running after me, said in a low voice,

"If you are taxed with *Evelina*, don't own it; I intend to say it is mine, for sport's sake."

You may think how much I was surprised, and how readily I agreed not to own it; but I could ask no questions, for the two Miss Palmers followed close, saying,

"Now pray, ma'am, tell us who it is?"

"No, no," cried Mrs. Thrale, "who it is, you must find out; I have told you that you dined with the author; but the rest you must make out as you can."

Miss Thrale began tittering violently, but I entreated her not to betray me; and, as soon as I could, I got Mrs. Thrale to tell me what all this meant. She then acquainted me, that when she first came into the parlour, she found them all busy in talking of *Evelina*; and heard that Sir Joshua had declared he would give fifty pounds to know the author.

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[1] Calvert was the name of Mr. Seward's father's partner. This was probably a relative.

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "thus much, then, I will tell you; the author will dine with you to-day."

They were then all distracted to know the party.

"Why," said she, "we shall have Dr. Calvert, Lady Ladd, Rose Fuller, and Miss Burney."

"Miss Burney?" quoth they, "which Miss Burney?"

"Why, the eldest, Miss Fanny Burney; and so out of this list, you must make out the author."

I shook my head at her, but begged her, at least, to go no further.

"No, no," cried she, laughing, "leave me alone; the fun will be to make them think it mine."

However, as I learnt at night, when they were gone, Sir Joshua was so very importunate with Mr. Thrale, and attacked him with such eagerness, that he made him confess who it was, as soon as the ladies retired.

Well, to return to our walk. The Miss Palmers grew more and more urgent.

"Did we indeed," said the eldest, "dine with the author of *Evelina*?"

"Yes, in good truth did you."

"Why then, ma'am, it was yourself!"

"I shan't tell you whether it was or not; but were there not other people at dinner besides me? What think you of Dr. Calvert?"

"Dr. Calvert? no, no; I am sure it was not he: besides, they say it was certainly written by a woman."

"By a woman? nay, then, is not here Lady Ladd, and Miss Burney, and Hester?"[1]

"Lady Ladd I am sure it was not, nor could it be Miss Thrale's. Oh, ma'am! I begin to think it was really yours! Now, was it not, Mrs. Thrale?"

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[1] *i.e.* "Queenie" Thrale

Mrs. Thrale only laughed. Lady Ladd, coming suddenly behind me, put her hands on my shoulders, and whispered,

"Shall I tell?"

"Tell?—tell what?" cried I, amazed.

"Why, whose it is!"

"Oh, ma'am," cried I, "who has been so wicked as to tell your ladyship?"

"Oh, no matter for that; I have known it some time."

I entreated her, however, to keep counsel, though I could not forbear expressing my surprise and chagrin.

"A lady of our acquaintance," said Miss Palmer, "Mrs. Cholmondeley, went herself to the printer, but he would not tell."

"Would he not?" cried Mrs. Thrale; "why, then, he's an honest man."

"Oh, is he so?—nay, then, it is certainly Mrs. Thrale's!"

"Well, well, I told you before I should not deny it."

"Miss Burney," said she, "pray do you deny it?" in a voice that seemed to say,—I must ask round, though rather from civility than suspicion.

"Me?" cried I, "oh no: if nobody else will deny it, why should I? It does not seem the fashion to deny it."

"No, in truth," cried she; "I believe nobody would think of denying it that could claim it, for it is the sweetest book in the world. My uncle could not go to bed till he had finished it, and he says he is sure he shall make love to the author, if ever he meets with her, and it should really be a woman!"

"Dear madam," cried Miss Offy, "I am sure it was you; but why will you not own it at once?"

"I shall neither own nor deny anything about it."

"A gentleman whom we know very well," said Miss Palmer, "when he could learn nothing at the printer's, took the trouble to go all about Snow Hill, to see if he could find any silversmiths."[1]

"Well, he was a cunning creature!" said Mrs. Thrale; "but Dr. Johnson's favourite is Mr. Smith."

"So he is of everybody," answered she; "he and all that family: everybody says such a family never was drawn before. But Mrs. Cholmondeley's favourite is Madame Duval; she acts her from morning to night, and *ma-foi's* everybody she sees. But though we all want so much to know the author, both Mrs. Cholmondeley and my uncle himself say they should be frightened to death to be in her company, because she must be such a very nice observer, that there would be no escaping her with safety."

What strange ideas are taken from mere book-reading! But what follows gave me the highest delight I can feel.

"Mr. Burke,"[2] she continued, "doats on it: he began it one morning at 7 o'clock, and could not leave it a moment; he sat up all night reading it. He says he has not seen such a book he can't tell when."

Mrs. Thrale gave me involuntarily a look of congratulation, and could not forbear exclaiming, "How glad she was Mr. Burke approved it!" This served to confirm the Palmers in their mistake, and they now, without further questioning, quietly and unaffectedly concluded the book to be really Mrs. Thrale's; and Miss Palmer said,

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[1] Mr. Branghton of *Evelina* was a silversmith on Snow Hill.

[2] The first mention of Fanny's most illustrious friend after Johnson, Edmund Burke, 1729-97. His portrait was included in the Thrale Gallery.

"Indeed, ma'am, you ought to write a novel every year: nobody can write like you!"

[I was both delighted and diverted at this mistake, and they grew so easy and so satisfied under it, that the conversation dropped, and Offy went to the harpsichord.

When the gentlemen came in to tea, Rose Fuller, who sat on the other side of me, began a conversation with the Miss Palmers in a very low voice, and they listened with the most profound attention; but presently, hearing Miss Palmer say, "How astonishing! what an extraordinary performance! what a nice observer she must be!" I began to fear Rose Fuller was himself *au fait*. However, they all spoke so low, I could only now and then gather a word; but I found the tenour of the conversation to be all commendation, mixed with expressions of surprise.

Lady Ladd would not let me listen as I wished to do, for she interrupted me to ask (almost killing herself with laughter as she spoke) whether I was ever at Vauxhall the last night? I knew what she meant, and wished young Branghton over head and ears in a kennel for drawing me into such a scrape.]

Not long after, the party broke up, and they took leave.

I had no conversation with Sir Joshua all day; but I found myself much more an object of attention to him than I wished to be; and he several times spoke to me, though he did not make love![1]

When they rose to take leave, Miss Palmer, with the air of asking the greatest of favours, hoped to see me when I returned to town; and Sir Joshua, approaching me with the most profound respect, inquired how long I should remain at Streatham? A week, I believed: and then he hoped, when I left it, they should have the honour of seeing me in Leicester Square.

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[1] See Sir Joshua's declaration above, p. 106.

In short, the joke is, the people speak as if they were afraid of me, instead of my being afraid of them. It seems, when they got to the door, Miss Palmer said to Mrs. Thrale,

"Ma'am, so it's Miss Burney after all!"

"Ay, sure," answered she, "who should it be?"

"Ah! why did not you tell us sooner?" said Offy, "that we might have had a little talk about it?"

Here, therefore, end all my hopes of secrecy! I take leave of them with the utmost regret, and though never yet was any scribbler drawn more honourably, more creditably, more partially into notice, I nevertheless cannot persuade myself to rejoice in the loss of my dear old obscurity.

. . . . . .

Tuesday morning, Mrs. Thrale asked me if I did not want to see Mrs. Montagu?[1] I truly said, I should be the most insensible of all animals not to like to see our sex's glory.

"Well," said she, "we'll try to make you see her. Sir Joshua says she is in town, and I will write and ask her here. I wish you to see her of all things."

Mrs. Thrale wrote her note before breakfast.

I had a great deal of private confab afterwards with Lady Ladd and Miss Thrale, concerning Miss Streatfield: I find she is by no means a favourite with either of them, though she is half adored by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and by Dr. Johnson. And Lady Ladd, among other things, mentioned her being here once when Mrs. Montagu came, and blamed Mrs. Thrale for making much of her before Mrs. Montagu; "who," she added, "has no notion of any girl acquaintance, and indeed, makes a point of only cultivating people of consequence."

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[1] Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, *née* Robinson, 1720-1800, letter-writer, leader of society, and originator of "The Blue Stocking Club." In 1769 she had published an *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear.* There is a well-known mezzotint of her by J. R. Smith, after Reynolds, dated 1776. See Johnson's praise of her at p. 116.

I determined, in my own mind, to make use of this hint, and keep myself as much out of her way as I could. Indeed, at any rate, a woman of such celebrity in the literary world would be the last I should covet to converse with, though one of the first I should wish to listen to.

Lady Ladd went to town before dinner. Her ladyship is immensely civil to me, and we are mighty facetious together. I find she has really some drollery about her, when she lays aside her dignity and stateliness, and is very fond of jocoseness, to which she contributes her part much better than I first imagined she could.

An answer came from Mrs. Montagu at noon. Mrs. Thrale gave it me to read: it was in a high strain of *politesse*,[1] expressed equal admiration and regard for Mrs. Thrale, and accepted her invitation for the next day. But what was my surprise to read, at the bottom of the letter, "I have not yet seen *Evelina*, but will certainly get it: and if it should not happen to please me, the disgrace must be mine, not the author's."

"Oh, ma'am," cried I, "what does this mean?"

"Why, only," said she, "that, in my letter this morning I said, 'Have you seen the new work called *Evelina*? it was written by an amiable young friend of mine, and I wish much to know your opinion of it; for if you should not approve it, what signifies the approbation of a Johnson, a Burke, etc.?'"

[Oh, what a woman is this Mrs. Thrale!—since she will make the book known,—how sweet a method was this of letting Mrs. Montagu know the honour it has received !]

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[1] Cf. *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 157, where Johnson and Mrs. Thrale discuss one of her alembicated epistles.

Before dinner, to my great joy, Dr. Johnson returned home from Warley Common.[1] I followed Mrs. Thrale into the library to see him, and he is so near-sighted that he took me for Miss Streatfield : but he did not welcome me less kindly when he found his mistake, which Mrs. Thrale made known by saying, "No, 'tis Miss Streatfield's rival, Miss Burney."

At tea-time the subject turned upon the domestic economy of Dr. Johnson's own household. Mrs. Thrale has often acquainted me that his house is quite filled and overrun with all sorts of strange creatures, whom he admits for mere charity, and because nobody else will admit them — for his charity is unbounded, — or, rather, bounded only by his circumstances.

The account he gave of the adventures and absurdities of the set was highly diverting, but too diffused for writing, though one or two speeches I must give. I think I shall occasionally theatricalise my dialogues.

Mrs. Thrale.—Pray, sir, how does Mrs. Williams like all this tribe ?

Dr. Johnson.—Madam, she does not like them at all ; but their fondness for her is not greater. She and De Mullin[2] quarrel incessantly; but as they can both be occasionally of service to each other, and as neither of them have any other place to go to, their animosity does not force them to separate.

Mrs. T.—And pray, sir, what is Mr. Macbean ?[3]

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[1] Fears of French invasion had established a camp at Warley Common in Essex ; and Johnson had been to visit Bennet Langton, who was a captain in the Lincolnshire Militia.

[2] Mrs. Desmoulins was the daughter of Johnson's godfather, Dr. Swinfen, and the widow of a writing-master named Desmoulins. She was with Johnson when he died.

[3] Alexander Macbean, *d.* 1784. His *Dictionary of Ancient Geography* appeared in 1773, with a Preface by Johnson.

Dr. J.—Madam, he is a Scotchman: he is a man of great learning, and for his learning I respect him, and I wish to serve him. He knows many languages, and knows them well; but he knows nothing of life. I advised him to write a geographical dictionary; but I have lost all hopes of his ever doing anything properly, since I found he gave as much labour to Capua as to Rome.

Mr. T.—And pray who is clerk of your kitchen, sir?

Dr. J.—Why, sir, I am afraid there is none; a general anarchy prevails in my kitchen, as I am told by Mr. Levat,[1] who says it is not now what it used to be!

Mrs. T.—Mr. Levat, I suppose, sir, has the office of keeping the hospital in health? for he is an apothecary.

Dr. J.—Levat, madam, is a brutal fellow, but I have a good regard for him; for his brutality is in his manners, not his mind.

Mr. T.—But how do you get your dinners drest?

Dr. J.—Why, De Mullin has the chief management of the kitchen; but our roasting is not magnificent, for we have no jack.

Mr. T.—No jack? Why, how do they manage without?

Dr. J.—Small joints, I believe, they manage with a string, and larger are done at the tavern. I have some thoughts (with a profound gravity) of buying a jack, because I think a jack is some credit to a house.

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[1] Robert Levett, 1701-82, a worthy but eccentric surgeon who had been domesticated with Johnson since 1763. Some of the doctor's best verses were prompted by his old friend's death. Here are stanzas 2 and 7:—

Well tried through many a varying year,
  See Levett to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
  Of every friendless name the friend.

. . . .

His virtues walked their narrow round,
  Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the Eternal Master found
  The single talent well-employed.

Mr. T.—Well, but you'll have a spit, too?

Dr. J.—No, sir, no; that would be superfluous; for we shall never use it; and if a jack is seen, a spit will be presumed!

Mrs. T.—But pray, sir, who is the Poll[1] you talk of? She that you used to abet in her quarrels with Mrs. Williams, and call out, "At her again, Poll! Never flinch, Poll"?

Dr. J.—Why, I took to Poll very well at first, but she won't do upon a nearer examination.

Mrs. T.—How came she among you, sir?

Dr. J.—Why, I don't rightly remember, but we could spare her very well from us. Poll is a stupid slut; I had some hopes of her at first; but when I talked to her tightly and closely, I could make nothing of her; she was wiggle-waggle, and I could never persuade her to be categorical. I wish Miss Burney would come among us; if she would only give us a week, we should furnish her with ample materials for a new scene in her next work.

A little while after he asked Mrs. Thrale, who had read *Evelina* in his absence?

"Who?" cried she;—"why, Burke!—Burke sat up all night to finish it; and Sir Joshua Reynolds is mad about it, and said he would give fifty pounds to know the author. But our fun was with his nieces—we made them believe I wrote the book, and the girls gave me the credit of it at once."

"I am sorry for it, madam," cried he, quite angrily,—"you were much to blame; deceits of that kind ought never to be practised; they have a worse tendency than you are aware of."

Mrs. T.—Why, don't frighten yourself, sir; Miss Burney will have all the credit she has a right to, for I told them whose it was before they went.

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[1] Miss Carmichael, otherwise "Poll," another of Johnson's pensioners.

Dr. J.—But you were very wrong for misleading them a moment; such jests are extremely blamable; they are foolish in the very act, and they are wrong, because they always leave a doubt upon the mind. What first passed will be always recollected by those girls, and they will never feel clearly convinced which wrote the book, Mrs. Thrale or Miss Burney.

Mrs. T.—Well, well, I am ready to take my Bible oath it was not me; and if that won't do, Miss Burney must take hers too.

I was then looking over the *Life of Cowley*,[1] which he had himself given me to read, at the same time that he gave to Mrs. Thrale that of Waller. They are now printed, though they will not be published for some time. But he bade me put it away.

"Do," cried he, "put away that now, and prattle with us; I can't make this little Burney prattle, and I am sure she prattles well; but I shall teach her another lesson than to sit thus silent before I have done with her."

"To talk," cried I, "is the only lesson I shall be backward to learn from you, sir."

"You shall give me," cried he, "a discourse upon the passions: come, begin! Tell us the necessity of regulating them, watching over and curbing them! Did you ever read Norris's *Theory of Love*?"[2]

"No, sir," said I, laughing, yet staring a little.

Dr. J.—Well, it is worth your reading. He will make you see that inordinate love is the root of all evil: inordinate love of wealth brings on avarice; of wine, brings on intemperance; of power, brings on cruelty; and so on. He deduces from inordinate love all human frailty.

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[1] The first of the *Lives of the Poets*. It had been sent to press in December 1777. Waller, Denham, and Butler came next.

[2] Published in 1688. The author, a mystic and disciple of Malebranche, was the Rev. John Norris, 1657-1711, rector of Bemerton.

Mrs. T.—To-morrow, sir, Mrs. Montagu dines here, and then you will have talk enough.

Dr. Johnson began to see-saw, with a countenance strongly expressive of inward fun, and after enjoying it some time in silence, he suddenly, and with great animation, turned to me and cried,

"Down with her, Burney!—down with her!—spare her not!—attack her, fight her, and down with her at once! You are a rising wit, and she is at the top; and when I was beginning the world, and was nothing and nobody, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits! and then everybody loved to halloo me on. But there is no game now; everybody would be glad to see me conquered: but then, when I was new, to vanquish the great ones was all the delight of my poor little dear soul! So at her, Burney—at her, and down with her!"

Oh, how we were all amused! By the way I must tell you that Mrs. Montagu is in very great estimation here, even with Dr. Johnson himself, when others do not praise her improperly. Mrs. Thrale ranks her as the first of women in the literary way. I should have told you that Miss Gregory, daughter of the Gregory who wrote the *Letters*, or, *Legacy of Advice*,[1] lives with Mrs. Montagu, and was invited to accompany her.

"Mark now," said Dr. Johnson, "if I contradict her to-morrow. I am determined, let her say what she will, that I will not contradict her."

Mrs. T.—Why, to be sure, sir, you did put her a little out of countenance last time she came. Yet you were neither rough, nor cruel, nor ill-natured; but still, when a lady changes colour, we imagine her feelings are not quite composed.

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[1] John Gregory, M.D., 1724-73. His letters, entitled *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, were published posthumously in 1774.

Dr. J.—Why, madam, I won't answer that I shan't contradict her again, if she provokes me as she did then; but a less provocation I will withstand. I believe I am not high in her good graces already; and I begin (added he, laughing heartily) to tremble for my admission into her new house.[1] I doubt I shall never see the inside of it.

(Mrs. Montagu is building a most superb house.)

Mrs. T.—Oh, I warrant you, she fears you, indeed; but that, you know, is nothing uncommon: and dearly I love to hear your disquisitions; for certainly she is the first woman for literary knowledge in England, and if in England, I hope I may say in the world.

Dr. J.—I believe you may, madam. She diffuses more knowledge in her conversation than any woman I know, or, indeed, almost any man.

Mrs. T.—I declare I know no man equal to her, take away yourself and Burke, for that art. And you who love magnificence, won't quarrel with her, as everybody else does, for her love of finery.

Dr. J.—No, I shall not quarrel with her upon that topic. (Then, looking earnestly at me), "Nay," he added, "it's very handsome!"

"What, sir?" cried I, amazed.

"Why, your cap:—I have looked at it some time, and I like it much. It has not that vile bandeau across it, which I have so often cursed."

Did you ever hear anything so strange? nothing escapes him. My Daddy Crisp is not more minute in his attentions: nay, I think he is even less so.

Mrs. T.—Well, sir, that bandeau you quarrelled with was worn by every woman at court the last birthday,[1] and I observed that all the men found fault with it.

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[1] Montagu House, Portman Square. This was the mansion of the peacock hangings celebrated by Cowper—

The Birds put off their every hue
To dress a room for Montagu.

Dr. J.—The truth is, women, take them in general, have no idea of grace. Fashion is all they think of. I don't mean Mrs. Thrale and Miss Burney, when I talk of women!—they are goddesses!—and therefore I except them.

Mrs. T.—Lady Ladd never wore the bandeau, and said she never would, because it is unbecoming.

Dr. J. (laughing).—Did not she? then is Lady Ladd a charming woman, and I have yet hopes of entering into engagements with her!

Mrs. T.—Well, as to that I can't say; but to be sure, the only similitude I have yet discovered in you, is in size: there you agree mighty well.

Dr. J.—Why, if anybody could have worn the bandeau, it must have been Lady Ladd; for there is enough of her to carry it off; but you are too little for anything ridiculous; that which seems nothing upon a Patagonian, will become very conspicuous upon a Lilliputian, and of you there is so little in all, that one single absurdity would swallow up half of you.

Some time after, when we had all been a few minutes wholly silent, he turned to me and said,

"Come, Burney, shall you and I study our parts against Mrs. Montagu comes?"

"Miss Burney," cried Mr. Thrale, "you must get up your courage for this encounter! I think you should begin with Miss Gregory; and down with her first."

Dr. J.—No, no, always fly at the eagle! down with Mrs. Montagu herself! I hope she will come full of *Evelina*!

Wednesday.—At breakfast, Dr. Johnson asked me, if I had been reading his *Life of Cowley*?

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[1] "New clothes on the birthday were the fashion for all loyal people" (Thackeray's *Four Georges*, 1866, pp. 96, 97).

"Oh yes," said I.

"And what do you think of it?"

"I am delighted with it," cried I; "and if I was somebody, instead of nobody, I should not have read it without telling you sooner what I think of it, and unasked."

Again, when I took up Cowley's *Life*, he made me put it away to talk. I could not help remarking how very like Dr. Johnson is to his writing; and how much the same thing it was to hear or to read him; but that nobody could tell that without coming to Streatham, for his language was generally imagined to be laboured and studied, instead of the mere common flow of his thoughts.[1]

"Very true," said Mrs. Thrale, "he writes and talks with the same ease, and in the same manner; but, sir (to him), if this rogue is like her book, how will she trim all of us by and by! Now, she dainties us up with all the meekness in the world; but when we are away, I suppose she pays us off finely."

"My paying off," cried I, "is like the Latin of Hudibras,

"... who never scanted,
His learning unto such as wanted;[2]

for I can figure like anything when I am with those who can't figure at all."

Mrs. T.—Oh, if you have any *mag*[3] in you, we'll draw it out!

Dr. J.—A rogue! she told me that if she was somebody instead of nobody, she would praise my book!

F. B.—Why, sir, I am sure you would scoff my praise.

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[1] This is a curious testimony to Johnson's later style. See also Mrs. Thrale's reply.

[2] *Hudibras*, Pt. I. Canto i. ll. 55-6 (not textual).

[3] Mag=chatter (Davies, *Supplemental Glossary*).

Dr. J.—If you think that, you think very ill of me; but you don't think it.

Mrs. T.—We have told her what you said to Miss More, and I believe that makes her afraid.[1]

Dr. J.—Well, and if she was to serve me as Miss More did, I should say the same thing to her. But I think she will not. Hannah More has very good intellects, too; but she has by no means the elegance of Miss Burney.

"Well," cried I, "there are folks that are to be spoilt, and folks that are not to be spoilt, as well in the world as in the nursery; but what will become of me, I know not."

Mrs. T.—Well, if you are spoilt, we can only say, nothing in the world is so pleasant as being spoilt.

Dr. J.—No, no; Burney will not be spoilt: she knows too well what praise she has a claim to, and what not, to be in any danger of spoiling.

F. B.—I do, indeed, believe I shall never be spoilt at Streatham, for it is the last place where I can feel of any consequence.

Mrs. T.—Well, sir, she is *our* Miss Burney, however; we were the first to catch her, and now we have got, we will keep her. And so she is all our own.

Dr. J.—Yes, I hope she is; I should be very sorry to lose Miss Burney.

F. B.—Oh, dear! how can two such people sit and talk such——

Mrs. T.—Such stuff, you think? but Dr. Johnson's love——

Dr. J.—Love? no, I don't entirely love her yet; I must see more of her first; I have much too high an opinion of her to flatter her. I have, indeed, seen nothing of her but what is fit to be loved, but I must know her more. I admire her, and greatly too.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 99.

F. B.—Well, this is a very new style to me! I have long enough had reason to think myself loved, but admiration is perfectly new to me.

Dr. J.—I admire her for her observation, for her good sense, for her humour, for her discernment, for her manner of expressing them, and for all her writing talents.

I quite sigh beneath the weight of such praise from such persons—sigh with mixed gratitude for the present, and fear for the future; for I think I shall never, never be able to support myself long so well with them.

We could not prevail with him to stay till Mrs. Montagu arrived, though, by appointment, she came very early. She and Miss Gregory came by one o'clock.

There was no party to meet her.

She is middle-sized, very thin, and looks infirm; she has a sensible and penetrating countenance, and the air and manner of a woman accustomed to being distinguished, and of great parts. Dr. Johnson, who agrees in this, told us that a Mrs. Hervey, of his acquaintance, says, she can remember Mrs. Montagu *trying* for this same air and manner. Mr. Crisp has said the same: however, nobody can now impartially see her, and not confess that she has extremely well succeeded.

My expectations, which were compounded of the praise of Mrs. Thrale, and the abuse of Mr. Crisp, were most exactly answered, for I thought her in a medium way.

Miss Gregory is a fine young woman, and seems gentle and well-bred.

A bustle with the dog Presto—Mrs. Thrale's favourite—at the entrance of these ladies into the library, prevented any formal reception; but as soon as Mrs. Montagu heard my name, she inquired very civilly after my father, and made many speeches concerning a volume of *Linguet*,[1] which she has lost; but she hopes soon to be able to replace it. I am sure he is very high in her favour, because she did me the honour of addressing herself to me three or four times.

But my ease and tranquillity were soon disturbed: for she had not been in the room more than ten minutes, ere, turning to Mrs. Thrale, she said—

"Oh, ma'am—but your *Evelina*—I have not yet got it—I sent for it, but the bookseller had it not. However, I will certainly have it."

"Ay, I hope so," answered Mrs. Thrale, "and I hope you will like it too; for 'tis a book to be liked."

I began now a vehement nose-blowing, for the benefit of handkerchiefing my face.

"I hope though," said Mrs. Montagu drily, "it is not in verse? I can read anything in prose, but I have a great dread of a long story in verse."

"No, ma'am, no; 'tis all in prose, I assure you. 'Tis a novel; and an exceeding —— but it does nothing good to be praised too much, so I will say nothing more about it; only this, that Mr. Burke sat up all night to read it."

"Indeed? Well, I propose myself great pleasure from it; and I am gratified by hearing it is written by a woman."

"And Sir Joshua Reynolds," continued Mrs. Thrale, "has been offering fifty pounds to know the author."

"Well, I will have it to read on my journey; I am going to Berkshire, and it shall be my travelling book."

"No, ma'am, if you please you shall have it now. Queeny, do look for it for Mrs. Montagu, and let it be put in her carriage, and go to town with her."

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[1] S. N. H. Linguet, 1736-94, was a political and miscellaneous writer (see *post*, p. 125).

Miss Thrale rose to look for it, and involuntarily I rose too, intending to walk off, for my situation was inexpressibly awkward; but then I recollected that if I went away, it might seem like giving Mrs. Thrale leave and opportunity to tell my tale, and therefore I stopped at a distant window, where I busied myself in contemplating the poultry.

"And Dr. Johnson, ma'am," added my kind puffer, "says Fielding never wrote so well—never wrote equal to this book; he says it is a better picture of life and manners than is to be found anywhere in Fielding."

"Indeed?" cried Mrs. Montagu surprised; "that I did not expect, for I have been informed it is the work of a young lady, and therefore, though I expected a very pretty book, I supposed it to be a work of mere imagination, and the name I thought attractive; but life and manners I never dreamt of finding."

"Well, ma'am, what I tell you is literally true; and for my part, I am never better pleased than when good girls write clever books—and that this is clever—But all this time we are killing Miss Burney, who wrote the book herself."

What a clap of thunder was this!—the last thing in the world I should have expected before my face! I know not what bewitched Mrs. Thrale, but this was carrying the jest farther than ever. All *retenue* being now at an end, I fairly and abruptly took to my heels, and ran out of the room with the utmost trepidation, amidst astonished exclamations from Mrs. Montagu and Miss Gregory.

I was horribly disconcerted, but I am now so irrecoverably in for it, that I begin to leave off reproaches and expostulations; indeed, they have very little availed me while they might have been of service, but now they would pass for mere parade and affectation; and therefore since they can do no good, I gulp them down. I find them, indeed, somewhat hard of digestion, but they must make their own way as well as they can.

I determined not to make my appearance again till dinner was upon table; yet I could neither read nor write, nor indeed do anything but consider the new situation in life into which I am thus hurried—I had almost said forced—and if I had, methinks it would be no untruth.

Miss Thrale came laughing up after me, and tried to persuade me to return. She was mightily diverted all the morning, and came to me with repeated messages of summons to attend the company; but I could not *brave* it again into the room, and therefore entreated her to say I was finishing a letter. Yet I was sorry to lose so much of Mrs. Montagu.

When dinner was upon table, I followed the procession, in a tragedy step, as Mr. Thrale will have it, into the dining-parlour. Dr. Johnson was returned.

The conversation was not brilliant, nor do I remember much of it; but Mrs. Montagu behaved to me just as I could have wished, since she spoke to me very little, but spoke that little with the utmost politeness. But Miss Gregory, though herself a very modest girl, quite stared me out of countenance, and never took her eyes off my face.

When Mrs. Montagu's new house[1] was talked of, Dr. Johnson, in a jocose manner, desired to know if he should be invited to see it.

"Ay, sure," cried Mrs. Montagu, looking well pleased; "or else I shan't like it: but I invite you all to a house warming; I shall hope for the honour of seeing all this company at my new house next Easter day: I fix the day now that it may be remembered."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 116.

Everybody bowed and accepted the invite but me, and I thought fitting not to hear it; for I have no notion at snapping at invites from the eminent. But Dr. Johnson, who sat next to me, was determined I should be of the party, for he suddenly clapped his hand on my shoulder, and called out aloud—

"Little Burney, you and I will go together!"

"Yes, surely," cried Mrs. Montagu, "I shall hope for the pleasure of seeing 'Evelina.'"

"*Evelina?*" repeated he; "has Mrs. Montagu then found out *Evelina?*"

"Yes," cried she, "and I am proud of it: I am proud that a work so commended should be a woman's."

Oh, how my face burnt!

"Has Mrs. Montagu," asked Dr. Johnson, "read *Evelina?*"

"No, sir, not yet; but I shall immediately, for I feel the greatest eagerness to read it."

"I am very sorry, madam," replied he, "that you have not read it already, because you cannot speak of it with a full conviction of its merit: which, I believe, when you have read it, you will find great pleasure in acknowledging."

Some other things were said, but I remember them not, for I could hardly keep my place: but my sweet, naughty Mrs. Thrale looked delighted for me.

I made tea as usual, and Mrs. Montagu and Miss Gregory seated themselves on each side of me.

"I can see," said the former, "that Miss Burney is very like her father, and that is a good thing, for everybody would wish to be like Dr.

Burney. Pray, when you see him, give my best respects to him; I am afraid he thinks me a thief with his *Linguet*;[1] but I assure you I am a very honest woman, and I spent full three hours in looking for it."

"I am sure," cried Mrs. Thrale, "Dr. Burney would much rather you should have employed that time about some other book."

They went away very early, because Mrs. Montagu is a great coward in a carriage. She repeated her invitation as she left the room. So now that I am invited to Mrs. Montagu's, I think the measure of my glory full!

When they were gone, how did Dr. Johnson astonish me by asking if I had observed what an ugly cap Miss Gregory had on? And then taking both my hands, and looking at me with an expression of much kindness, he said,

"Well, Miss Burney, Mrs. Montagu now will read *Evelina*."

To read it he seems to think is all that is wanted, and, far as I am from being of the same opinion, I dare not to him make disqualifying speeches, because it might seem impertinent to suppose her more difficult to please than himself.

"You were very kind, sir," cried I, "to speak of it with so much favour and indulgence at dinner; yet I hardly knew how to sit it then, though I shall be always proud to remember it hereafter."

"Why, it is true," said he, kindly, "that such things are disagreeable to sit, nor do I wonder you were distressed; yet sometimes they are necessary."

Was this not very kind? I am sure he meant that the sanction of his good opinion, so publicly given to Mrs. Montagu, would in a manner stamp the success of my book; and though, had I been allowed to preserve the snugness I had planned, I need not have concerned myself at all about its fate, yet now that I find myself exposed with it, I cannot but wish it insured from disgrace.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 121.

"Well, sir," cried I, "I don't think I shall mind Mrs. Montagu herself now; after what you have said, I believe I should not mind even abuse from any one."

"No, no, never mind them!" cried he; "resolve not to mind them: they can do you no serious hurt."

Mrs. Thrale then told me such civil things. Mrs. Montagu, it seems, during my retreat, inquired very particularly what kind of book it was?

"And I told her," continued Mrs. Thrale, "that it was a picture of life, manners, and characters. 'But won't she go on?' says she; 'surely she won't stop here?'

"'Why,' said I, 'I want her to go on in a new path—I want her to write a comedy.'

"'But,' said Mrs. Montagu, 'one thing must be considered; Fielding, who was so admirable in novel-writing, never succeeded when he wrote for the stage.'"

"Very well said," cried Dr. Johnson; "that was an answer which showed she considered her subject."

Mrs. Thrale continued:

"'Well, but *à propos*,' said Mrs. Montagu, 'if Miss Burney does write a play, I beg I may know of it; or, if she thinks proper, see it; and all my influence is at her service. We shall all be glad to assist in spreading the fame of Miss Burney.'"

I tremble for what all this will end in. I verily think I had best stop where I am, and never again attempt writing: for after so much honour, so much success—how shall I bear a downfall?

Mrs. T.—Oh, *à propos*; now you have a new edition[1] coming out, why should you not put your name to it?

F. B.—Oh, ma'am—I would not for the world!

Mrs. T.—And why not? come, let us have done now with all this diddle-daddle.

F. B.—No, indeed, ma'am; so long as I live I never can consent to that.

Mrs. T.—Well, but seriously, Miss Burney, why should you not? I advise it with all my heart, and I'll tell you why; you want hardening, and how can you get it better than by putting your name to this book (to begin with), which everybody likes, and against which I have heard nobody offer any objection? You can never write what will please more universally.

F. B.—But why, ma'am, should I be hardened?

Mrs. T.—To enable you to bear a little abuse by and by.

F. B.—Oh, Heaven forbid I should be tried in that way!

Mrs. T.—Oh, you must not talk so; I hope to live to see you trimmed very handsomely.

F. B.—Heaven forbid! I am sure I should hang or drown myself in such a case!

Mrs. T.—You grieve me to hear you talk so; is not everybody abused that meets with success? You must prepare yourself not to mind a few squibs. How is Dr. Johnson abused! and who thinks the worse of him?

This comparison made me grin, and so our discourse ended. But pray Heaven may spare me the horror irrecoverable of personal abuse! Let them criticise, cut, slash, without mercy my book, and let them neglect me; but may God avert my becoming a public theme of ridicule! In such a case, how should I wish *Evelina* had followed her humble predecessors to the all-devouring flames, which, in consuming her, would have preserved her creatress!

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[1] This was premature, for the second edition is dated 1779. Mrs. Chappel, of East Orchard, Shaftesbury, has a copy of this edition, presented by the author to Dr. Burney:—"From his dutiful scribler." His name is also filled up in the heading of the dedicatory verses.

Monday, September 21.—I am more comfortable here than ever; Dr. Johnson honours me with increasing kindness; Mr. Thrale is much more easy and sociable than when I was here before; I am quite jocose, whenever I please, with Miss Thrale; and the charming head and life of the house, her mother, stands the test of the closest examination, as well and as much to her honour as she does a mere cursory view. She is, indeed, all that is excellent and desirable in woman.

I have had a thousand delightful conversations with Dr. Johnson, who, whether he loves me or not, I am sure seems to have some opinion of my discretion, for he speaks of all this house to me with unbounded confidence, neither diminishing faults, nor exaggerating praise. Whenever he is below stairs he keeps me a prisoner, for he does not like I should quit the room a moment; if I rise he constantly calls out, "Don't you go, little Burney!"

Last night, when we were talking of compliments and of gross speeches, Mrs. Thrale most justly said that nobody could make either like Dr. Johnson. "Your compliments, sir, are made seldom, but when they are made they have an elegance unequalled; but then when you are angry, who dares make speeches so bitter and so cruel?"

Dr. J.—Madam, I am always sorry when I make bitter speeches, and I never do it but when I am insufferably vexed.

Mrs. T.—Yes, sir; but you suffer things to vex you, that nobody else would vex at. I am sure I have had my share of scolding from you!

Dr. J.—It is true, you have; but you have borne it like an angel, and you have been the better for it.

Mrs. T.—That I believe, sir: for I have received more instruction from you than from any man, or any book: and the vanity that you should think me worth instructing, always overcame the vanity of being found fault with. And so you had the scolding, and I the improvement.

F. B.—And I am sure both make for the honour of both.

Dr. J.—I think so too. But Mrs. Thrale is a sweet creature, and never angry; she has a temper the most delightful of any woman I ever knew.

Mrs. T.—This I can tell you, sir, and without any flattery—I not only bear your reproofs when present, but in almost everything I do in your absence, I ask myself whether you would like it, and what you would say to it. Yet I believe there is nobody you dispute with oftener than me.

F. B.—But you two are so well established with one another, that you can bear a rebuff that would kill a stranger.

Dr. J.—Yes; but we disputed the same before we were so well established with one another.

Mrs. T.—Oh, sometimes I think I shall die no other death than hearing the bitter things he says to others. What he says to myself I can bear, because I know how sincerely he is my friend, and that he means to mend me; but to others it is cruel.

Dr. J.—Why, madam, you often provoke me to say severe things, by unreasonable commendation. If you would not call for my praise, I would not give you my censure; but it constantly moves my indignation to be applied to, to speak well of a thing which I think contemptible.

F. B.—Well, this I know, whoever I may hear complain of Dr. Johnson's severity, I shall always vouch for his kindness, as far as regards myself, and his indulgence.

Mrs. T.—Ay, but I hope he will trim you yet, too!

Dr. J.—I hope not: I should be very sorry to say anything that should vex my dear little Burney.

F. B.—If you did, sir, it would vex me more than you can imagine. I should sink in a minute.

Mrs. T.—I remember, sir, when we were travelling in Wales, how you called me to account for my civility to the people; "Madam," you said, "let me have no more of this idle commendation of nothing. Why is it, that whatever you see, and whoever you see, you are to be so indiscriminately lavish of praise?" "Why I'll tell you, sir," said I, "when I am with you, and Mr. Thrale, and Queeny, I am obliged to be civil for four!"

There was a cutter for you! But this I must say, for the honour of both—Mrs. Thrale speaks to Dr. Johnson with as much sincerity (though with greater softness), as he does to her.

Well, now I have given so many fine compliments from Dr. Johnson and Mrs Thrale, suppose, by way of contrast and variety, I give a few of Rose Fuller's. He called here on Saturday morning, with his little dog Sharp, who is his constant companion. When the common salutations were over, and everybody had said something to him and his dog, he applied to me.

"Well, Miss Burney, and how do you do? Pray how do you like my little dog? His name is Sharp."

F. B.—Oh, very well!

Mr. Fuller.—I am very glad to hear it; I shall pique myself upon Miss Burney's opinion, and "that sort of thing"; I assure you I am quite proud of it. I have got an *Evelina* of my own now, Mrs. Thrale; we shall break the bookseller, for Dr. Calvert sent for it too. I am now in the middle of the second volume: upon my word, Miss Burney, "in that sort of way," 'tis amazing how you've hit off characters! Upon my word, I never read anything higher! I declare I never laughed so in my life. And, give me leave to say, for "that sort of thing," I think that Captain a very ingenious sort of man; upon my word he is quite smart in some of his replies; but he is too hard upon the old Frenchwoman, too.[1]

[In the evening he came to tea, with Mr. Stephen Fuller, his uncle, a sensible and gentlemanlike-looking man, but who is dreadfully deaf. Rose Fuller sat by me, and began again upon *Evelina*; indeed, now the ice is broken, I believe he will talk of nothing else.

"Well, Miss Burney, I must tell you all the secrets, now, in that sort of way. I put the first volume into Mr. Stephen Fuller's hands; but I did not tell him,—don't be alarmed, I kept counsel; but upon my word, you never saw a man laugh so. I could hardly get him to come, in that sort of way; he says he never saw characters so well hit off,—true! upon my word! I was obliged to take the book from him, "and that sort of thing," or we should have been too late for dinner. But, upon my word, 'tis amazing, everybody says, in that sort of way.]

Streatham, September 26.—I have, from want of time, neglected my journal so long, that I cannot now pretend to go on methodically, and be particular as to dates.

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[1] This shows that even landsmen thought Captain Mirvan overdrawn.

Messrs. Stephen and Rose Fuller stayed very late on Monday; the former talking very rationally upon various subjects, and the latter boring us with his systems and "those sort of things." Yet he is something of a favourite, "in that sort of way," at this house, because of his invincible good humour, and Mrs. Thrale says she would not change him as a neighbour for a much wiser man. Dr. Johnson says he would make a very good Mr. Smith: "Let him but," he adds, "pass a month or two in Holborn, and I would desire no better."

The other evening the conversation fell upon Romney,[1] the painter, who has lately got into great business, and who was first recommended and patronised by Mr. Cumberland.

"See, madam," said Dr. Johnson, laughing, "what it is to have the favour of a literary man! I think I have had no hero a great while; Dr. Goldsmith was my last; but I have had none since his time till my little Burney came!"

"Ay, sir," said Mrs. Thrale, "Miss Burney is the heroine now; is it not really true, sir?"

"To be sure it is, my dear!" answered he, with a gravity that made not only me, but Mr. Thrale laugh heartily.

Another time, Mr. Thrale said he had seen Dr. Jebb, "and he told me he was afraid Miss Burney would have gone into a consumption," said he; "but I informed him how well you are, and he committed you to my care; so I shall insist now upon being sole judge of what wine you drink."

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[1] George Romney, 1734-1802, the "man in Cavendish Square," as Reynolds called him. He had settled at No. 32 in 1775, and was now in full practice and reputation. When, earlier, he had painted Cumberland's portrait, he was poorly housed in Great Newport Street. "I sate to him," says Cumberland, "and was the first, who encouraged him to advance his terms, by paying him ten guineas for his performance" (*Memoirs*, 1807, ii. 213).

(*N.B.*—He had often disputed this point.)

Dr. J.—Why, did Dr. Jebb forbid her wine?

F. B.—Yes, sir.

Dr. J.—Well, he was in the right; he knows how apt wits are to transgress that way. He was certainly right!

In this sort of ridiculous manner he *wits* me eternally. But the present chief sport with Mrs. Thrale is disposing of me in the holy state of matrimony, and she offers me whoever comes to the house. This was begun by Mrs. Montagu, who, it seems, proposed a match for me in my absence, with Sir Joshua Reynolds!—no less a man, I assure you![1]

When I was dressing for dinner, Mrs. Thrale told me that Mr. Crutchley[2] was expected.

"Who's he?" quoth I.

"A young man of very large fortune, who was a ward of Mr. Thrale. Queeny, what do you say of him for Miss Burney?"

"Him?" cried she; "no, indeed; what has Miss Burney done to have him?"

"Nay, believe me, a man of his fortune may offer himself anywhere. However, I won't recommend him."

"Why then, ma'am," cried I, with dignity, "I reject him!"

This Mr. Crutchley stayed till after breakfast the next morning. I can't tell you anything of him, because I neither like nor dislike him.

Mr. Crutchley was scarce gone, ere Mr. Smith arrived. Mr. Smith is a second cousin of Mr. Thrale, and a modest pretty sort of young man.

He stayed till Friday morning. When he was gone,

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[1] See *post*, under December 28, 1782.

[2] Mr. Jerry Crutchley was supposed to be Thrale's natural son (*Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi*, 1861, i. 144, 155).

"What say you to him, Miss Burney?" cried Mrs. Thrale—"I am sure I offer you variety."

"Why, I like him better than Mr. Crutchley, but I don't think I shall pine for either of them."

"Dr. Johnson," said Mrs. Thrale, "don't you think Jerry Crutchley very much improved?"

Dr. J.—Yes, madam, I think he is.

Mrs. T.—Shall he have Miss Burney?

Dr. J.—Why, I think not; at least I must know more of him; I must inquire into his connections, his recreations, his employments, and his character, from his intimates, before I trust Miss Burney with him. And he must come down very handsomely with a settlement. I will not have him left to his generosity; for as he will marry her for her wit, and she him for his fortune, he ought to bid well; and let him come down with what he will, his price will never be equal to her worth.

Mrs. T.—She says she likes Mr. Smith better.

Dr. J.—Yes, but I won't have her like Mr. Smith without the money, better than Mr. Crutchley with it. Besides, if she has Crutchley, he will use her well, to vindicate his choice. The world, madam, has a reasonable claim upon all mankind to account for their conduct; therefore, if with his great wealth he marries a woman who has but little, he will be more attentive to display her merit than if she was equally rich,—in order to show that the woman he has chosen deserves from the world all the respect and admiration it can bestow, or that else she would not have been his choice.

Mrs. T.—I believe young Smith is the better man.

F. B.—Well, I won't be rash in thinking of either; I will take some time for consideration before I fix.

Dr. J.—Why, I don't hold it to be delicate to offer marriages to ladies, even in jest, nor do I approve such sort of jocularity; yet for once I must break through the rules of decorum, and propose a match myself for Miss Burney. I therefore nominate Sir J—— L——.[1]

Mrs. T.—I'll give you my word, sir, you are not the first to say that, for my master, the other morning, when we were alone, said, "What would I give that Sir J—— L—— was married to Miss Burney; it might restore him to our family." So spoke his uncle and guardian.

F. B.—He, he! Ha, ha! He, he! Ha, ha!

Dr. J.—That was elegantly said of my master, and nobly said, and not in the vulgar way we have been saying it. And where, madam, will you find another man in trade who will make such a speech—who will be capable of making such a speech? Well, I am glad my master takes so to Miss Burney; I would have everybody take to Miss Burney, so as they allow me to take to her most! Yet I don't know whether Sir J—— L—— should have her, neither. I should be afraid for her; I don't think I would hand her to him.

F. B.—Why, now, what a fine match is here broken off!

Some time after, when we were in the library, he asked me very gravely if I loved reading?

"Yes," quoth I.

"Why do you doubt it, sir?" cried Mrs. Thrale.

"Because," answered he, "I never see her with a book in her hand. I have taken notice that she never has been reading whenever I have come into the room."

"Sir," quoth I courageously, "I am always afraid of being caught reading, lest I should pass for being studious or affected, and therefore instead of making a display of books, I always try to hide them, as is the case at this very time, for I have now your *Life of Waller* under my gloves behind me. However, since I am piqued to it, I'll boldly produce my voucher."

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[1] Sir John Lade, see *ante*, p. 72.

And so saying, I put the book on the table, and opened it with a flourishing air. And then the laugh was on my side, for he could not help making a droll face; and if he had known Kitty Cooke, I would have called out, "There I had you, my lad!"[1]

"And now," quoth Mrs. Thrale, "you must be more careful than ever of not being thought bookish, for now you are known for a wit and a *bel esprit*, you will be watched, and if you are not upon your guard, all the misses will rise up against you."

Dr. J.—Nay, nay, now it is too late. You may read as much as you will now, for you are in for it,—you are dipped over head and ears in the Castalian stream, and so I hope you will be invulnerable.

Another time, when we were talking of the licentiousness of the newspapers, Dr. Johnson said,

"I wonder they have never yet had a touch at little Burney."

"Oh, Heaven forbid!" cried I: "I am sure if they did, I believe I should try the depth of Mr. Thrale's spring-pond."[2]

"No, no, my dear, no," cried he kindly, "you must resolve not to mind them; you must set yourself against them, and not let any such nonsense affect you."

"There is nobody," said Mrs. Thrale, "tempers the satirist with so much meekness as Miss Burney."

Satirist, indeed! is it not a satire upon words, to call me so?

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[1] See Editor's Introduction, p. 11.

[2] The spring-pond had been dug by Thrale at Streatham Place. In imitation, probably of Duck Island in St. James's Park, it had its "*Dick's* Island."

"I hope to Heaven I shall never be tried," cried I, "for I am sure I should never bear it. Of my book they may say what they will and welcome, but if they touch at me I shall be——"

"Nay," said Mrs. Thrale, "if you are not afraid for the book, I am sure they can say no harm of the author."

"Never let them know," said Dr. Johnson, "which way you shall most mind them, and then they will stick to the book; but you must never acknowledge how tender you are for the author."

MR. CRISP TO MISS F. BURNEY

November 6, 1778.

MY DEAR FANNIKIN—Since peace is proclaimed, and I am got out of my hobble, I am content, and shall never lose a thought more in considering how I got into it. My object now is to reap the fruits of the accommodation; of which the principal article is to be, an open trade and renewal of commerce and confidence, together with a strict observance of former treaties, by which no new alliances are to be formed to the prejudice of the old family compact. These preliminaries being acceded to, nothing now remains but to sing *Te Deum*, and play off the fireworks.

I do entirely acquit you of all wish or design of being known to the world as an author. I believe it is ever the case with writers of real merit and genius, on the appearance of their first productions: as their powers are finer and keener than other people's, so is their sensibility. On these occasions they are as nervous as Lady Louisa in *Evelina.* But surely these painful feelings ought to go off when the salts of general applause are continually held under their nose. It is then time to follow your friend Dr. Johnson's advice, and learn to be a swaggerer, at least so far as to be able to face the world, and not be ashamed of the distinction you have fairly earned, especially when it is apparent you do not court it.

I now proceed to assume the daddy, and consequently the privilege of giving counsel. Your kind and judicious friends are certainly in the right in wishing you to make your talents turn to something more solid than empty praise. When you come to know the world half so well as I do, and what yahoos mankind are, you will then be convinced that a state of independence is the only basis on which to rest your future ease and comfort. You are now young, lively, gay. You please, and the world smiles upon you—this is your time. Years and wrinkles in their due season (perhaps attended with want of health and spirits) will succeed. You will then be no longer the same Fanny of 1778, feasted, caressed, admired, with all the soothing circumstances of your present situation. The Thrales, the Johnsons, the Sewards, Cholmondeleys, etc., etc., who are now so high in fashion, and might be such powerful protectors as almost to insure success to anything that is tolerable, may then themselves be moved off the stage. I will no longer dwell on so disagreeable a change of the scene; let me only earnestly urge you to act vigorously (what I really believe is in your power) a distinguished part in the present one—"now while it is yet day, and before the night cometh, when no man can work."

I must again and again repeat my former admonitions regarding your posture in reading and writing; it is of infinite consequence, especially to such lungs, and such a frame as yours.[1]

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[1] "Daddy" Crisp had already warned her against her "murtherous stooping" (*Early Diary*, 1889, i. lxxxiii.).

Lastly, if you do resolve to undertake anything of the nature your friends recommend, keep it (if possible) an impenetrable secret that you are even about such a work. Let it be all your own till it is finished entirely in your own way; it will be time enough then to consult such friends as you think capable of judging and advising. If you suffer any one to interfere till then, 'tis ten to one 'tis the worse for it—it won't be all of a piece. In these cases generally the more cooks the worse broth, and I have more than once observed those pieces that have stole privately into the world, without midwives, or godfathers and godmothers, like your own, and the *Tale of a Tub*, and a few others, have far exceeded any that followed.

Your loving daddy,
S. C.

Diary resumed

Saturday evening Mr. and Mrs. Thrale took me quite round the paddock, and showed me their hot-houses, kitchen-gardens, etc. Their size and their contents are astonishing: but we have not once missed a pineapple since I came, and therefore you may imagine their abundance; besides grapes, melons, peaches, nectarines, and ices.

[Sunday we went to Streatham Church, and afterwards to visit the family of the P——s,[1] who now live in B—— House, which is about half a mile off. The papa I did not see; the mamma is a civil, simple woman, and the daughters are pretty, well-dressed, trifling, and furiously extravagant.]

While Mrs. Thrale and I were dressing, and, as usual, confabbing, a chaise drove into the park, and word was brought that Mr. Seward was arrived.

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[1] Query, Pitches.

"You don't know much of Mr. Seward, Miss Burney?" said Mrs. Thrale.

I could have told her I wished he had not known much of me; but her maid was in my way, and I only said, "No."

"But I hope you will know more of him," said she, "for I want you to take to him. He is a charming young man, though not without oddities. Few people do him justice, because, as Dr. Johnson calls him, he is an abrupt young man; but he has excellent qualities, and an excellent understanding. He has the misfortune to be an hypochondriac, so he runs about the world to borrow spirits, and to forget himself. But after all, if his disorders are merely imaginary, the imagination is disorder sufficient, and therefore I am sorry for him."

The day passed very agreeably, but I have no time for particulars. I fight very shy with Mr. Seward, and as he has a great share of sense and penetration, and not a little one of pride and reserve, he takes the hint; and I believe he would as soon bite off his own nose as mention *Evelina* again. And, indeed, now that the propriety of his after-conduct has softened me in his favour, I begin to think of him much in the same way Mrs. Thrale does, for he is very sensible, very intelligent, and very well bred.

Monday was the day for our great party; and the doctor came home, at Mrs. Thrale's request, to meet them.

The party consisted of Mr. C——, who was formerly a timber-merchant, but having amassed a fortune of one million of pounds, he has left off business. He is a good-natured, busy sort of man.

Mrs. C——, his lady, a sort of Mrs. Nobody.

Mr. N——, another rich business leaver-off.

Mrs. N——, his lady; a pretty sort of woman, who was formerly a pupil of Dr. Hawkesworth.[1] I had a great deal of talk with her about him, and about my favourite Miss Kinnaird,[2] whom she knew very well.

Mr. George and Mr. Thomas N——, her sons-in-law.

Mr. R——, of whom I know nothing but that he married into Mr. Thrale's family.

Lady Ladd; I ought to have begun with her. I beg her ladyship a thousand pardons—though if she knew my offence, I am sure I should not obtain one. She is own sister to Mr. Thrale. She is a tall and stout woman, has an air of mingled dignity and haughtiness, both of which wear off in conversation. She dresses very youthful and gaily, and attends to her person with no little complacency. She appears to me uncultivated in knowledge, though an adept in the manners of the world, and all that. She chooses to be much more lively than her brother; but liveliness sits as awkwardly upon her as her pink ribbons. In talking her over with Mrs. Thrale, who has a very proper regard for her, but who, I am sure, cannot be blind to her faults, she gave me another proof to those I have already had, of the uncontrolled freedom of speech which Dr. Johnson exercises to everybody, and which everybody receives quietly from him. Lady Ladd has been very handsome, but is now, I think, quite ugly—at least she has a sort of face I like not. Well, she was a little while ago dressed in so showy a manner as to attract the doctor's notice, and when he had looked at her some time, he broke out aloud into this quotation:

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[1] John Hawkesworth, 1715-73, of the *Adventurer* and Cook's *Voyages*. He is mentioned in *Early Diary*, 1889, i. 262-64, as a visitor at St. Martin's Street.

[2] Miss Margaret Kinnaird, *d.* 1800, daughter of the sixth Baron Kinnaird, and married in 1779 to Mr. Thomas Wiggins.

With patches, paint, and jewels on,
Sure Phillis is not twenty-one!
But if at night you Phillis see,
The dame at least is forty-three!

I don't recollect the verses exactly, but such was their purport.

"However," said Mrs. Thrale, "Lady Ladd took it very good-naturedly, and only said,

"'I know enough of that forty-three—I don't desire to hear any more of it!'"

Miss Moss, a pretty girl, who played and sung, to the great fatigue of Mrs. Thrale; Mr. Rose Fuller, Mr. Embry, Mr. Seward, Dr. Johnson, the three Thrales, and myself, close the party.

We had a sumptuous dinner of three courses, and a most superb dessert. I shall give no account of the day, because our common days are so much more worth recounting.

[I had the honour of making tea for all this set, and upon my word I was pretty well tired of it. But since the first two days I have always made tea, and now I am also the breakfast woman. I am by no means fond of the task, but I am very glad to do anything that is any sort of relief to Mrs. T.]

In the evening the company divided pretty much into parties, and almost everybody walked upon the gravel-walk before the windows. I was going to have joined some of them, when Dr. Johnson stopped me, and asked how I did.

"I was afraid, sir," cried I, "you did not intend to know me again, for you have not spoken to me before since your return from town."

"My dear," cried he, taking both my hands, "I was not sure of you, I am so near-sighted, and I apprehended making some mistake."

Then drawing me very unexpectedly towards him, he actually kissed me!

To be sure, I was a little surprised, having no idea of such facetiousness from him. However, I was glad nobody was in the room but Mrs. Thrale, who stood close to us, and Mr. Embry, who was lounging on a sofa at the farthest end of the room. Mrs. Thrale laughed heartily, and said she hoped I was contented with his amends for not knowing me sooner.

A little after she said she would go and walk with the rest, if she did not fear for my reputation in being left with the doctor.

"However, as Mr. Embry is yonder, I think he'll take some care of you," she added.

"Ay, madam," said the doctor, "we shall do very well; but I assure you I shan't part with Miss Burney!"

And he held me by both hands; and when Mrs. Thrale went, he drew me a chair himself facing the window, close to his own; and thus *tête-à-tête* we continued almost all the evening. I say *tête-à-tête*, because Mr. Embry kept at an humble distance, and offered us no interruption. And though Mr. Seward soon after came in, he also seated himself in a distant corner, not presuming, he said, to break in upon us! Everybody, he added, gave way to the doctor.

Our conversation chiefly was upon the Hebrides, for he always talks to me of Scotland, out of sport; and he wished I had been of that tour — quite gravely, I assure you!

Tuesday morning our breakfast was delightful. We had Mr. Seward, Mr. Embry, and Lady Ladd added to our usual party, and Dr. Johnson was quite in a sportive humour. But I can only write some few speeches, wanting time to be prolix, not inclination.

"Sir," said Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, "why did you not sooner leave your wine yesterday, and come to us? we had a Miss who sung and played like anything!"

"Ay, had you?" said he drolly; "and why did you not call me to the rapturous entertainment?"

"Why, I was afraid you would not have praised her, for I sat thinking all the time myself whether it were better to sing and play as she sang and played, or to do nothing. And at first I thought she had the best of it, for we were but stupid before she began; but afterwards she made it so long, that I thought *nothing* had all the advantage. But, sir, Lady Ladd has had the same misfortune you had, for she has fallen down and hurt herself woefully."

"How did that happen, madam?"

"Why, sir, the heel of her shoe caught in something."

"Heel?" replied he; "nay, then, if her ladyship, who walks six foot high" (*N.B.* this is a fact), "will wear a high heel, I think she almost deserves a fall."

"Nay, sir, my heel was not so high!" cried Lady Ladd.

"But, madam, why should you wear any? That for which there is no occasion, had always better be dispensed with. However, a fall to your ladyship is nothing," continued he, laughing; "you, who are light and little, can soon recover; but I who am a gross man, might suffer severely: with your ladyship the case is different, for

> "Airy substance soon unites again."[1]

Poor Lady Ladd, who is quite a strapper, made no answer, but she was not offended. Mrs. Thrale and I afterwards settled, that not knowing his allusion from the *Rape of the Lock*, she only thought he had made a stupid sort of speech, and did not trouble herself to find a meaning to it.

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[1] *Rape of the Lock*, Canto iii. 152.

"However," continued he, "if my fall does confine me, I will make my confinement pleasant, for Miss Burney shall nurse me—positively!" (and he slapped his hand on the table), "and then, she shall sing to me, and soothe my cares."

When public news was started, Mr. Thrale desired the subject might be waived till my father came, and could let us know what part of the late accounts were true.

Mr. Thrale then offered to carry Mr. Seward, who was obliged to go to town, in the coach with him,—and Mr. Embry also left us. But Dr. Johnson sat with Mrs. Thrale, Lady Ladd, and me for an hour or two.

The subject was given by Lady Ladd; it was the respect due from the lower class of the people.

"I know my place," said she, "and I always take it: and I've no notion of not taking it. But Mrs. Thrale lets all sort of people do just as they've a mind by her."

"Ay," said Mrs. Thrale, "why should I torment and worry myself about all the paltry marks of respect that consist in bows and courtesies?—I have no idea of troubling myself about the manners of all the people I mix with."

"No," said Lady Ladd, "so they will take all sort of liberties with you. I remember, when you were at my house, how the hair-dresser flung down the comb as soon as you were dressed, and went out of the room without making a bow."

"Well, all the better," said Mrs. Thrale; "for if he had made me one, ten thousand to one if I had seen it. I was glad enough to get him out of the room; I did not want him to stand bowing and cringing."

"If any man had behaved so insolently to me," answered she, "I would never again have suffered him in my house."

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "your ladyship has a great deal more dignity than I have!—Dr. Johnson, we are talking of the respect due from inferiors;—and Lady Ladd is of the same side you are."

"Why, madam," said he, "subordination is always necessary to the preservation of order and decorum."

"I protest," said Lady Ladd, "I have no notion of submitting to any kind of impertinence: and I never will bear either to have any person nod to me, or enter a room where I am, without bowing."

"But, madam," said Dr. Johnson, "what if they will nod, and what if they won't bow?—how then?"

"Why, I always tell them of it," said she.

"Oh, commend me to that!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "I'd sooner never see another bow in my life, than turn dancing-master to hair-dressers."

The doctor laughed his approbation, but said that every man had a right to a certain degree of respect, and no man liked to be defrauded of that right.

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Thrale, "I hope you meet with respect enough!"

"Yes, madam," answered he, "I am very well contented."

"Nay, if you an't, I don't know who should be; for I believe there is no man in the world so greatly respected."

Soon after he went, I went and shut myself up in a sweet cool summer-house,[1] to read *Irene*:—which, indeed, though not a good play, is a beautiful poem.

As my dear father spent the rest of the day here,

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[1] This was the summer-house where Johnson read and worked and made pious resolutions (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. 134).

I will not further particularise, but leave accounts to his better communication. He probably told you that the P—— family came in to tea; and, as he knows Mrs. P——, pray tell him what Dr. Johnson says of her. When they were gone Mrs. Thrale complained that she was quite worn out with that tiresome silly woman, who had talked of her family and affairs till she was sick to death of hearing her.

"Madam," said he, "why do you blame the woman for the only sensible thing she could do—talking of her family and her affairs? For how should a woman who is as empty as a drum, talk upon any other subject?—If you speak to her of the sun, she does not know it rises in the east;—if you speak to her of the moon, she does not know it changes at the full;—if you speak to her of the queen, she does not know she is the king's wife;—how, then, can you blame her for talking of her family and affairs?"

Yesterday morning, to my great regret, Dr. Johnson went to town, but we expect him again to-day. Lady Ladd also went yesterday.

When they were gone, I had such a conversation with Mrs. Thrale! We were alone in the library for, I believe, three hours, and though I shall only give you two or three of the principal speeches, I am sure you will not wonder that the extraordinary good opinion she professes of me should have quite overpowered me with gratitude and surprise.

Our *tête-à-tête* began by comparing notes about *Irene*, and picking out favourite passages, and agreeing that though the language and sentiments are equally noble, there was not any reason to wonder that the play altogether had no success on the stage. Thence we talked over all the plays we could recollect, and discussed their several merits according to our particular notions, and when we had mentioned a great number, approving some for this thing, and disliking others for that, Mrs. Thrale suddenly said,

"Now, Miss Burney, if you would write a play, I have a notion it would hit my taste in all things; do—you must write one; a play will be something worth your time—it is the road both to honour and profit; and why should you have it in your power to gain both, and not do it?

"I declare," continued she, "I mean, and think what I say, with all my heart and soul! You seem to me to have the right and true talents for writing a comedy; you would give us all the fun and humour we could wish, and you would give us a scene or two of the pathetic kind that would set all the rest off. If you would but try, I am sure you would succeed, and give us such a play as would be an honour to all your family. And, in the grave parts, all your sentiments would be edifying, and such as would do good,—and I am sure that would be real pleasure to you."

I recollect her words as exactly as my memory will allow.

"Hannah More," added she, "got nearly four hundred pounds for her foolish play,[1] and if you did not write a better than hers, I say you deserve to be whipped!—Your father, I know, thinks the same; but we will allow that he may be partial; but what can make me think it?—and Dr. Johnson;—he, of all men, would not say it if he did not think it."

She then rejoiced I had published *Evelina* as I did, without showing it to anybody; "because you have proved what are your own real resources," she said, "and now you have nothing to do but to write a play. Dr. Johnson, I am sure, will be at your service in anything in his power; we'll make him write your prologue;—we'll make him carry your play to the managers; we'll do anything for you;—and so, I am sure, he readily will. As to plot, situation, and character, nobody shall assist you in *them*, for nobody can!"

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[1] Hannah More's tragedy of *Percy* was produced at Covent Garden, December 10, 1777.

I will write no more, as these heads will give a notion of all the rest.

From Mr. Crisp to Miss F. Burney

Chessington, *Dec.* 8, 1778.

My dear Fannikin—Exclusive of the high entertainment your Susannitical letter afforded me, I was much delighted with it on another account, and that a solid and substantial one: I mean, because it informed me of those numerous and powerful friends, your own genius and intrinsic merit have raised you up. The prospect is now fair before you—it cannot but be bright when shone upon by such first-rate luminaries of wit and learning. Keep it in your eye; and if you pursue your path with resolution, not suffering yourself to be checked by indolence or diffidence, and an overstrained modesty, I daresay it will lead you on to the temple of fame, and perhaps to that of fortune.

'Tis true, I have more than once, Fanny, whispered in your ear a gentle caution—that you have much to lose. Why is that?—because much you have gained. Now you have gone so far, and so rapidly, you will not be allowed to slacken your pace. This is so far from being meant as a discouragement, that it is intended to animate you. But it will explain what was in my head when I threw out those (perhaps useless, perhaps too officious) hints. I plainly foresaw (what has since happened) that, as your next step, you would be urged, strongly urged, by your many friends and admirers, to undertake a comedy. I think you capable, highly capable of it; but in the attempt there are great difficulties in the way; some more particularly and individually in the way of a Fanny, than of most people.

I will instantly name these, lest you should misapprehend. I need not observe to you that in most of our successful comedies there are frequent lively freedoms (and waggeries that cannot be called licentious, neither) that give a strange animation and vigour to the style, and of which if it were to be deprived it would lose wonderfully of its salt and spirit. I mean such freedoms as ladies of the strictest character would make no scruple, openly, to laugh at, but at the same time, especially if they were prudes (and you know you are one), perhaps would shy at being known to be the authors of. Some comic characters would be deficient without strokes of this kind; in scenes where gay men of the world are got together, they are natural and expected; and the business would be mighty apt to grow *fade* without them.

Of late years (I can't tell why, unless from the great purity of the age) some very fine-spun, all-delicate, sentimental comedies[1] have been brought forth on the English, and more particularly on the French stage, which (in my coarse way of thinking, at least) are such sick things, so void of blood and spirits, that they may well be called *Comedies Larmoyantes*;—and I don't find that they have been greatly relished by the public in general, any more than by my vulgar soul. Moral—sublime to a degree—

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[1] These, which, notwithstanding the blow they had received from *She Stoops to Conquer* in 1773, were still alive, are admirably described in Goldsmith's essay in the *Westminster Magazine*, December 1772, vol. i. p. 4. He calls them "a kind of *mulish* production, with all the defects of its opposite parents [*i.e.* Comedy and Tragedy], and marked with sterility."

> We cannot blame, indeed,—but we may sleep![1]

They put me in mind of a poor girl, a Miss Peachy (a real, and in the end, a melancholy story). She was a fine young woman, but thinking herself too ruddy and blowzy, it was her custom to bleed herself (an art she had learned on purpose) three or four times, against the Rugby races, in order to appear more dainty and lady-like at the balls, etc. Poor thing!—she lost her aim; for when she came she appeared like a ghost, and at last became one:—her arm bled in the night, and in the morning she was past recovery.

I am afraid these fine performances are not pictures of real life and manners. I remember I sat next to a Frenchman at the play at Milan, who preferred the French theatre to the whole world, and as much disliked the English. When I asked his reason, he cried,

> "Ma foi, il faut pousser des beaux sentiments!"

Excuse these digressions: the sum total amounts to this—it appears to me extremely difficult, throughout a whole spirited comedy, to steer clear of those agreeable, frolicsome *jeux d'esprit*, on the one hand, and languor and heaviness on the other:—pray observe, I only say difficult—not impracticable—at least to your dexterity; and to that I leave it.

I find myself forestalled by the intelligent Mrs. Montagu in another observation I was going to make, and which she very justly and judiciously enforces by the instance she gives of Fielding,[2] who, though so eminent in characters and descriptions, did by no means succeed in comedy.

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[1] Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, 1711, l. 242.

[2] See *ante*, p. 126.

'Tis certain, different talents are requisite for the two species of writing, though they are by no means incompatible; I fear, however, the labouring oar lies on the comic author.

In these little entertaining elegant histories, the writer has his full scope; as large a range as he pleases to hunt in—to pick, cull, select whatever he likes: he takes his own time—he may be as minute as he pleases, and the more minute the better, provided that taste, a deep and penetrating knowledge of human nature, and the world, accompany that minuteness. When this is the case, the very soul, and all its most secret recesses and workings, are developed and laid as open to the view, as the blood globules circulating in a frog's foot, when seen through a microscope. The exquisite touches such a work is capable of (of which *Evelina* is, without flattery, a glaring instance), are truly charming. But of these great advantages, these resources, you are strangely curtailed the moment you begin a comedy. There everything passes in dialogue,—all goes on rapidly—narrative and descriptive, if not extremely short, become intolerable. The detail, which in Fielding, Marivaux, and Crebillon, is so delightful, on the stage would bear down all patience. There all must be compressed into quintessence; the moment the scene ceases to move on briskly, and business seems to hang, sighs and groans are the consequence. Dreadful sound!—In a word, if the plot, the story of the comedy does not open and unfold itself in the easy, natural, unconstrained flow of the dialogue—if that dialogue does not go on with spirit, wit, variety, fun, humour, repartee, and—and, all in short into the bargain—*serviteur*!—good-bye, t'ye!

One more: now, Fanny, don't imagine that I am discouraging you from the attempt: or that I am retracting or shirking back from what I have said above—*i.e.* that I think you highly capable of it. On the contrary, I reaffirm it: I affirm that in common conversation I observe in you a ready choice of words, with a quickness and conciseness that have often surprised me. This is a lucky gift for a comic writer, and not a very common one: so that if you have not the united talents I demand, I don't know who has: for if you have your familiar, your sprite, for ever thus at your elbow without calling for, surely it will not desert you, when in deep conjuration raising your genius in your closet.

God bless you, Adieu,—Your loving daddy—

S. C.

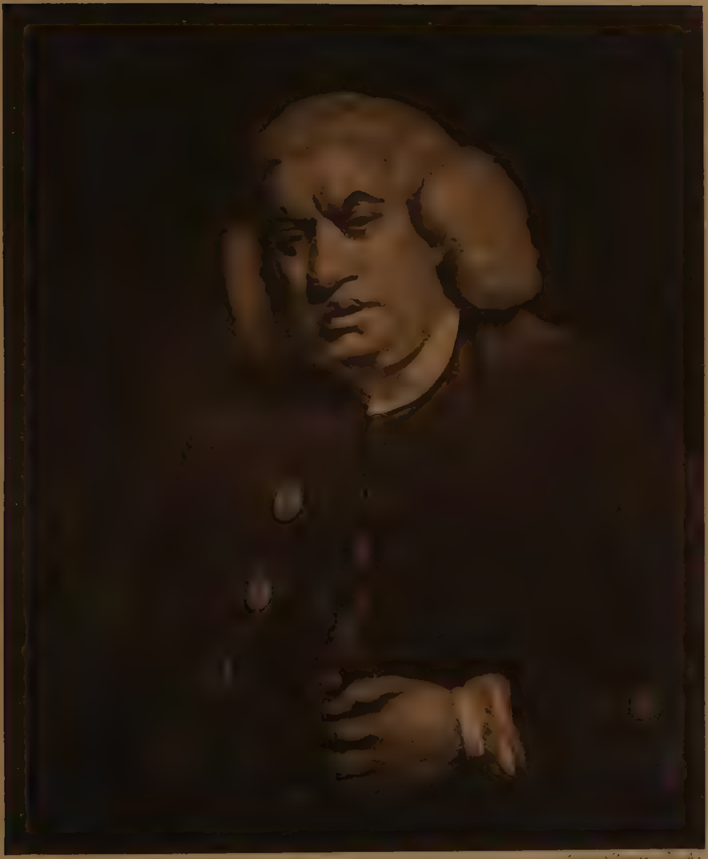
PART IV

1779

Diary resumed — Pacchierotti — Description of his singing—Bertoni—Giardini—Piozzi—An adventure—Dr. Francklin—Letters from Mrs. Thrale and Mr. Crisp—Remonstrance on false delicacy—Difficulties of dramatic writing—Dancing in fetters—How to use advice—Miss Burney's views on comedy—Female authorship—Letter from Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—The pains of publicity—Diary resumed—Sir Joshua Reynolds—Mason, the poet—Visit from Dr. Johnson—Mrs. Thrale — Visit to Sir Joshua Reynolds — Mrs. Horneck and Mrs. Bunbury — Lord Palmerston — Mrs. Cholmondeley—A scene—Cross-examination—A dialogue—The knight of Plympton—Visit to Streatham—Dr. Johnson—Mr. Seward—Dr. Burney—Fair and brown—A dialogue with Dr. Johnson—Books and authors—Table-talk between Johnson, Mrs. Thrale, and Miss Burney—*Evelina*—Mrs. Montagu—Three classes of critics on books—Miss Burney's anxiety to avoid notice as an author—Mrs. Cholmondeley—Lord Palmerston—Visit to Dr. Johnson—Mr. Seward—Lady Miller's vase—Baretti—Visit to Mrs. Cholmondeley—A party of wits and fashionables — The beautiful Mrs. Sheridan—Mrs. Crewe—Pacchierotti's singing—The Duke of Dorset and Miss Cumberland—Hannah More—Her habit of flattering her friends—The Earl of Harcourt—Mrs. Vesey—R. B. Sheridan—His personal appearance and manner—Dr. Joseph Warton—Sheridan's opinion of *Evelina*—The *Sylph*—Dialogue between Sheridan, Miss Burney, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Mrs. Cholmondeley—Miss Burney urged by Sheridan to write a comedy.

Diary resumed

St. Martin's Street, January 1779.—How will you bear, my dearest Susan, to hear about



Emery Walker Ph. sc.

Samuel Johnson
after Reynolds.

Pac[1]—may I finish the name? I am almost afraid—yet think it is a miserable compliment to treat you as a baby, and hide from you the playthings you must not have in your own hand. So I will only remind you of similar situations in which I have been; and, at the same time, reminding myself of your conduct upon those occasions—the upshot of all which will be a true account of the transaction.

Well, last Saturday morning, "mine fader" sent a present of his *History*[2] to Pacchierotti, by way of an incentive to the study of the English language. At the opera at night, he promised to call here on Sunday. And so on Sunday morning he came, attended by Signor Bertoni.[3]

Well, but he did not sing—so far be easy.

I like him of all things: he is perfectly modest, humble, well-bred, and unassuming. He has a very anxious desire to learn English, which he has studied grammatically, and with much application and diligence abroad: and he promised to come hither frequently to take lessons of conversation. By way of beginning with vigour, he settled to drink tea here the next day.

They came early, and I am more pleased with Pacchierotti than ever: he seems to be perfectly amiable, gentle, and good: his countenance is extremely benevolent, and his manners infinitely interesting. We are all become very good friends, and talked English, French, and Italian, by commodious starts, just as phrases occurred—an excellent device for appearing a good linguist.

He had a very bad cold, yet sung with the utmost good humour, as soon as asked. Bertoni accompanied him. He first sang a rondeau of "Artaserse," of Bertoni's. It is a very fine one, and had it been a very execrable one, he would have made it exquisite: such taste, expression, freedom, fancy, and variety, never were before joined, but in Agujari.[1] His voice, however, was by no means clear, though extremely touching: but his cold quite tormented him. He afterwards sung a song for a tenor in the same opera, and admirably; then some accompanied recitative to a song in the "Orfeo" of Bertoni,[2] and lastly, the "*Che farò senza Euridice.*"

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[1] Gasparo Pacchierotti, 1744-1821, a celebrated singer. He had just come to London with Bertoni.

[2] The *History of Music*, vol. i. of which had been issued in 1776.

[3] Ferdinando Giuseppe Bertoni, 1727-1810, a composer. He brought out "Quinto Fabio," in which Pacchierotti took Fabio.

He and I were very sociable: and he said, in English,

"Miss Borni give me very much encourage; but is very troublesome the difficulties."

Bertoni is very much that common sort of character that admits no delineation.

Piozzi, by invitation, came in the evening: he did not sing, but was very good-humoured.[3]

Giardini—not by invitation—came also.[4] We did not, just then, wish for him, but he was very *comique.*

[I have seen but four folks worth mentioning, these Italians excepted, since you went.

The first and second were, Mr. Magellan and Mr. Humphreys, who both drank tea on Monday se' night last.

Mr. Magellan was just *à l'ordinaire.* Mr. Humphreys was almost insufferable, from curiosity about the book-writer. He said not a word, but he looked all meaning, and actually stared me so much out of countenance, that I was obliged to contrive myself a seat out of his way. He seemed as if he thought to read in my face at least half the characters he had read in the book; *which* half, whether the *v*ulgar or the genteel part of the family, I cannot pretend to say, but I was not afflicted when he went.]

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[1] Lucrezia Agujari, otherwise *La Bastardina* or *Bastardella*, 1743-83, a celebrated singer, who had recently visited London. According to Grove's *Dictionary of Music* she was the highest and most extended *soprano* on record. Her voice reached "from the middle of the harpsichord to two notes above it," says Fanny (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 82).

[2] Bertoni wrote an "Orfeo" in 1776 to the same libretto as Gluck's.

[3] Gabriele Piozzi, *d.* 1809, afterwards the second husband of Mrs. Thrale.

[4] Felice de Giardini, 1716-96, violinist. From 1774 to 1780 he was leader of the Pantheon concerts.

. . . . . .

On Thursday, I had another adventure, and one that has made me grin ever since. A gentleman inquiring for my father, was asked into the parlour. The then inhabitants were only my mother and me. In entered a square old gentleman, well-wigged, formal, grave, and important. He seated himself. My mother asked if he had any message for my father?

"No, none."

Then he regarded me with a certain dry kind of attention for some time; after which, turning suddenly to my mother, he demanded,

"Pray, ma'am, is this your daughter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh! this is Evelina, is it?"

"No, sir," cried I, staring at him, and glad none of you were in the way to say Yes.

"No?" repeated he, incredulous; "is not your name Evelina, ma'am?"

"Dear, no, sir," again quoth I, staring harder.

"Ma'am," cried he drily, "I beg your pardon! I had understood your name was Evelina."

And soon after, he went away.

When he put down his card, who should it prove but Dr. Francklin![1] "Was it not queer?"

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[1] Thomas Francklin, D.D., 1721-84, Chaplain and Professor of Ancient History to the Royal Academy. In 1780 he had published a three-volume translation of *Lucian*, dedicated to Johnson.

From Mrs. Thrale to Miss Burney

Streatham.

Instead of writing monitory letters to Dick,[1] I find I must now be a little serious with the great "Evelina." Why will you, my lovely friend, give consequence to trifles, by thus putting your peace in their power? Is not the world full of severe misfortunes and real calamities? and will you fret and look pale about such nonsense as this? Let me see you on Thursday next, if but for an hour, and let me see you cheerful, I insist. Your looking dismal can only advertise the paltry pamphlet,[2] which I firmly believe no one out of your own family has seen, and which is now only lying like a dead kitten on the surface of a dirty horse-pond, incapable of scratching any one who does not take pains to dirty their fingers for it.

But it has proclaimed you authoress of *Evelina*! And is that an injury? Surely you are not yet to learn how highly that little sweet book has been praised, admired, and esteemed by people whose good word should at least weigh with you against such a wretch as I hear this is, who has mentioned your name irreverently—for I do not perceive he has done anything else at last.

And so, as Mowbray the brutal says of Lovelace the gay, "We comforted and advised him."[3]

When will Miss Susan come home, that I may have you here to brace your fibres, and enable you to endure these direful misfortunes? But I see you saying, "Why this is *Mrs. Selwyn*,[1] without her wit."

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[1] Richard Thomas Burney, Dr. Burney's son by his second wife. He went into the Indian Civil Service.

[2] This was a satire entitled *Warley*, by the Rev. George Huddesford, 1749-1809, in which, to the sensitive Fanny's "infinite *frettation*," she had been spoken of as "dear little Burney." "Will it gain approbation from 'dear little Burney'"—the writer had said.

[3] *Clarissa*, 1748, vii. 215.

Very well, madam; don't you be *Lady Louisa*, then, without her quality.

Give my best love and kindest compliments to your amiable household. You know if I love you, and may be sure I pity your pain, but do not mean to soothe it. This world is a rough road, and those who mean to tread it many years must not think of beginning their journey in buff soles.

What hurts me most is lest you should like me the less for this letter. Yet I will be true to my own sentiments and send it; if you will think me coarse and indelicate, I can't help it. You are twenty odd years old, and I am passed thirty-six—there's the true difference. I have lost seven children, and been cheated out of two thousand a year,[2] and I cannot, indeed I cannot, sigh and sorrow over pamphlets and paragraphs. Did you never hear Johnson's story of the "Man with his Paper and Packthread"?

Mr. Pepys[3]—my master in chancery, as your papa calls him—says you should try at a tragedy. He is in love with the character of *Macartney*, the pistol scene, and the *dénouement* with Sir John Belmont.

Murphy is charmed with the comic part, and thinks highly of the writer. Will these help to fill the scale against our formidable adversary—Heaven knows who—in the garret?

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[1] A caustic character in *Evelina*.

[2] Mrs. Thrale had twelve children in all, of whom only one was a boy, Henry, who died in 1776. Of eleven girls, four survived,—Hester (Lady Keith), Sophia (Mrs. Merrick Hoare), Susan, and Cecilia (Mrs. Mostyn). The money losses referred to were owing to a certain Humphrey Jackson, who had persuaded Thrale that beer could be produced without malt and hops (*Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi*, 2nd ed. 1861, ii., 25-27).

[3] William Weller Pepys, 1740-1825, afterwards a baronet. He was Master in Chancery from 1775 to his death. According to Walpole he had "a nose longer than himself." He gave Blue-Stocking parties, and was Prime Minister to Mrs. Montagu. His very interesting *Correspondence* has recently been published by Miss Gaussen (1904).

Adieu till Thursday, "my own dear little Burney," and forgive the sauciness of a truly affectionate and faithful friend, servant, etc.,

H. L. Thrale.

I can't stay till Thursday to hear if you forgive me, nor will forgiveness do. You must not love me less for all this—it would vex me more than many a silly couplet, which you mind more than your friends. Once more, adieu!

Miss F. Burney to Mr. Crisp

January 1779.

Your patience, my dear daddy, in being able to mention my name without invectives, as you have done in your letter to Hetty, forces me to write, because it makes me eager to thank you for not having taken offence at me. Indeed your last most excellent letter ought to have had my acknowledgments long since, but the fact is I received it when I was most violently out of sorts, and really had not spirits to answer it. I intended to have kept from you the subject of my uneasiness, because I know you will only scoff it, or, perhaps, think it should rather have gratified than dispirited me; and in truth I have been so plentifully lectured already upon my vexation, that I feel no *goût* for further lashing and slashing; and yet I will own to you the subject, because I had rather of the two you should think me a fool, than think I wanted gratitude sufficient to thank you for the many useful hints, the kind and excellent advice you took the trouble to give me.

In short, not to spend my whole letter in enigmatical preluding, just as I received your letter I had had information that my name had got into print, and what was yet worse, was printed in a new pamphlet.

I cannot tell you, and if I could you would perhaps not believe me, how greatly I was shocked, mortified, grieved, and confounded at this intelligence: I had always dreaded as a real evil my name's getting into print—but to be lugged into a pamphlet!

I must, however, now I have gone so far, tell you how it is, lest you should imagine matters worse. This vile pamphlet is called *Warley: a Satire*; it is addressed to the first artist in Europe, who proves to be Sir Joshua Reynolds. Probably it is to his unbounded partiality for *Evelina* that I owe this most disagreeable compliment, for he had been so eager to discover the author, that by what I had reason given me to conjecture, I fancy he has been not a little laughed at since the discovery, for divers *comique* sort of speeches which he had made while in the dark.

So now the murder's out! but, dear daddy, don't belabour me for my weakness, though I confess I was for more than a week unable to eat, drink, or sleep, for vehemence of vexation. I am now got tolerably stout again, but I have been furiously lectured for my folly (as I see everybody thinks it) by all who have known of it. I have, therefore, struggled against it with all my might, and am determined to aim at least at acquiring more strength of mind.

Yet, after all, I feel very forcibly that I am not —that I have not been—and that I never shall be formed or fitted for any business with the public. Yet now my best friends, and my father at their head, absolutely prohibit a retreat; otherwise I should be strongly tempted to empty the whole contents of my bureau into the fire, and to vow never again to fill it. But, had my name never got abroad with my book, ere this I question not I should again have tried how the world stood affected to me.

Now once again to your letter.

Why, my dear daddy, will you use so vile, so ill-applied a word as "*officious*" when you are giving me advice? Is it not of all favours the most valuable you can confer on me? and don't I know that if you had not somewhat of a sneaking kindness for me you would as soon bite off your own nose, as the Irishman says, as take so much trouble about me? I do most earnestly, seriously, and solemnly entreat that you will continue to me this first, best, greatest proof of regard, and I do, with the utmost truth and gratitude, assure you that it is more really flattering to me than all the flummery in the world. I only wish, with all my heart, you would be more liberal of it.

Every word you have urged concerning the salt and spirit of gay, unrestrained freedom in comedies, carries conviction along with it,—a conviction which I feel, in trembling; should I ever venture in that walk publicly, perhaps the want of it might prove fatal to me. I do, indeed, think it most likely that such would be the event, and my poor piece, though it might escape catcalls and riots, would be fairly slept off the stage. I cannot, however, attempt to avoid this danger, though I see it, for I would a thousand times rather forfeit my character as a writer, than risk ridicule or censure as a female. I have never set my heart on fame, and therefore would not, if I could, purchase it at the expense of all my own ideas of propriety. You who know me for a prude will not be surprised, and I hope not offended, at this avowal, for I should deceive you were I not to make it. If I should try, I must e'en take my chance, and all my own expectations may be pretty easily answered.

The Streathamites have been all reassembled for these six weeks, and I have had invitation upon invitation to join them, or, in Mrs. Thrale's words, to go home. But Susan is at Howletts,[1] and I can by no means leave town till her return. However, we correspond, and Mrs. Thrale's kindness for me promises to be as steady as it is flattering and delightful to me; but I never knew how much in earnest and in sincerity she was my friend till she heard of my infinite *frettation* upon occasion of being pamphleted; and then she took the trouble to write me a long scolding letter; and Dr. Johnson himself came to talk to me about it, and to reason with me; and now I see that they have sufficient regard to find fault with me, I do indeed hope that I am well with them.—Yours affectionately, F. B.

From Mr. Crisp to Miss F. Burney

Chessington, *January* 1779.

I long of all things, Fannikin, to see *Warley*, and the continuation of your Journal (for I have copied and will faithfully return by the first opportunity your last). If you answer me, you have not continued it, you are unpardonable, and I advise you to set about it immediately, as well as you can, while any traces of it rest in your memory. It will one day be the delight of your old age—it will call back your youth, your spirits, your pleasures, your friends, whom you formerly loved, and who loved you (at that time, also, probably, long gone off the stage), and lastly, when your own scene is closed, remain a valuable treasure to those that come after you. But I will not suppose you have not continued it—you can't be so wanting to yourself. This is what I require—the whole in all its details—not bits and scraps of three characters at a time, as you talk of—that won't satisfy my maw.

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[1] In Kent, the seat of Lady Hales, formerly Coussmaker.

As to your vexation, child, I don't mind it of a pin. Framed as you are, I knew that must come first before you could be easy. People that are destined to live in the midst of the world, must and ought to be inoculated before they can go about in safety. You talk of being slipped off the stage—would you wish your book to die such a death? There is no alternative; if it lives, its fate and yours are inseparable, and the names of *Evelina* and Burney must and will go together: so that your discontent at what has happened, to me seems strangely ill-founded; and your fantastic sickly stomach is to recoil forsooth, because you cannot compass impossibilities!

Well, I have been ruminating a good deal on the obstacles and difficulties I mentioned in my last, that lie directly across your path (as a prude) in the walk of comedy. On the most mature consideration, I do by no means retract the general principle that produced those observations; I will never allow you to sacrifice a grain of female delicacy for all the wit of Congreve and Vanbrugh put together—the purchase would be too dear; but thus much I will assert, and can prove by several instances, viz., that light principles may be displayed without light expressions; and that is a rock the female must take care to steer clear of—vice must not talk unlike itself; but there is no necessity it should show all its filth. A great deal of management and dexterity will certainly be requisite to preserve spirit and salt, and yet keep up delicacy; but it may be done, and you can do it if anybody. Do you remember, about a dozen years ago, how you used to dance Nancy

Dawson[1] on the grass plot, with your cap on the ground, and your long hair streaming down your back, one shoe off, and throwing about your head like a mad thing? Now you are to dance Nancy Dawson with fetters on; there is the difference: yet there is certainly a nameless grace and charm in giving a loose to that wildness and friskiness sometimes.

I am very glad you have secured Mrs. Montagu for your friend; her weight and interest are powerful; but there is one particular I do not relish; though she means it as a mark of favour and distinction; — it is, where she says, "If Miss Burney does write a play, I beg I may know of it, and (if she thinks proper) see it."

Now Fanny, this same seeing it (in a professed female wit, authoress, and Mæcenas into the bargain), I fear implies too much interference—implies advising, correcting, altering, etc. etc. etc.; not only so, but in so high a critic, the not submitting to such grand authority, might possibly give a secret, concealed, lurking offence. Now d'ye see, as I told you once before, I would have the whole be all my own—all of a piece; and to tell you the truth, I would not give a pin for the advice of the ablest friend who would not suffer me at last to follow my own judgment without resentment. Besides let me whisper in your ear the very words Dr. Johnson made use of when Miss Streatfield's letter was mentioned,—

"She is" etc. etc. etc.; "but my little B. writes a better letter."

Adieu! send me a vast journal to copy, containing a full and true account of all the variety of names you have given me a list of, and what they have said of and to you. May I send to

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[1] See *ante*, p. 40. It may be added to that note, that there is a portrait of Nancy Dawson in the Garrick Club.

Gast[1] my copy of your Journal, upon condition of her letting nobody see it but Molly Lenthal?[2] Shall we see you at Chessington this summer? or are you to be at home at Streatham the whole season, and the old homely home quite forgotten?

One more adieu! your loving daddy, S. C.

Diary resumed

To be sure I have been most plentifully lectured of late; and to be sure I have been most plentifully chagrined; but there is but one voice, and that goes against me. I must, therefore, give up the subject, and endeavour to forget the ideas it raised in me.

I will try, my dear Susy, to become somewhat more like other folks, if, as it seems by their reasoning, I am now so different to them. All that I can say for myself is, that I have always feared discovery, always sought concealment, and always known that no success could counter-balance the publishing my name. However, what is inevitable ought not to torment long, and after such counsel as I have received, from almost all my best friends, it becomes my duty to struggle against my refractory feelings.

And now, my love, let me thank you for your letter, and let me try to send you one that may make some amends for my last.

I will recollect the most particular circumstances that have happened, journal fashion, according to the old plan.

This same pamphlet that has so much grieved me, was brought home by my mother on Thursday. But who says my name is not at full length? I wish to Heaven it were not!

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[1] See Editor's Introduction, p. 11.

[2] Mrs. Lenthall of Burford, a descendant of Speaker Lenthall, and friend of Mrs. Gast.

At night my father went to the Royal Academy to hear Sir Joshua Reynolds discourse;[1] and now for a bouquet of uncommon fragrance. Mr. Mason[2] came up to my father, and wished him joy, and said the finest things imaginable of the book, and extolled the characters, and talked it all over. You who respect and admire Mr. Mason as much as I do, will be sure such praise was some cordial to me. Mr. Humphreys[3] too joined his vote. My father himself has seemed more pleased with Mr. Mason's approbation than with anybody's since the Streathamites'.

On Monday, to my great dissatisfaction, Mrs. Reynolds came.[4] I was woefully dumpish.

"Pray," said she, after some time, "how does Miss Fanny do? Oh no!—not Miss Fanny—Miss Sukey, I mean!—this I think is Miss Fanny?—though your name, ma'am, is swallowed up in another,—that of—of—of Miss Burney,—if not of—of—of, dear, how odd in Dr. Franklin to ask if that was not your name?"

To be sure I stared, and asked where she had her intelligence? I found, from my father himself.

"Well," continued she, "what would not Mrs. Horneck[5] and Mrs. Bunbury[6] give to see the writer of that book! Why, they say they would walk a hundred and sixty miles only to see her, if that would do!"

"Why then," quoth I, "I would walk just as far to avoid them!"

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[1] The Eighth Discourse, December 10, 1778.

[2] William Mason, 1724-97, the friend of Gray, and the author of *Elfrida*, 1752, and *Caractacus*, 1759. Dr. Burney had made his acquaintance at Mrs. Cibber's in Scotland Yard.

[3] Perhaps Ozias Humphry, the miniaturist, 1742-1810.

[4] Frances Reynolds, Sir Joshua's sister. See *ante*, p. 60.

[5] Mrs. Horneck was the widow of Captain Kane Horneck. She came, like Sir Joshua, from Devonshire.

[6] Mrs. Bunbury, 1754-99, was her daughter Catherine, Goldsmith's "Little Comedy," who had been married since 1771 to H. W. Bunbury of Barton, the caricaturist.

"Oh no! don't say that! I hope you will have the goodness to consent to meet them! But I think I have made out how Dr. Franklin came to say that odd thing. 'Oh, ho,' thought he, 'am I now in company with the writer of that celebrated book? Well, I must say something!' So then he became so embarrassed, that in his confusion he made the blunder."

Now I think the only doubt is, which was most infinitely absurd, the question or the comment?

[The next morning the Misses Palmer called. They were cold and formal, and full of reproaches that I had been so unsociable; however, by degrees, their reserve wore off. They invited me very pressingly for Saturday evening. I would fain have been excused, for I more than ever wished to avoid seeing Sir Joshua Reynolds, as I could not but suppose he as well as myself must think of this vile pamphlet upon our meeting, and as I must owe to his extreme partiality to the book, and talk of the writer, the line that mentions me. However, they obviated all possible objections, and disregarded all offered excuses. My father was to be at the Opera—still I must come. My mother was engaged by expecting Miss Young—still I was not to be let off. If I were ill, they vowed they would send a physician; and, in short, I was obliged to promise to wait on them; though I said I must hope at least to find them alone.

On Thursday, my dear father talked me over quite seriously, about my vexation; and, to be brief, made me promise to think no more of it—which though I could not literally perform, I have done all that in me lay.]

On Friday, I had a visit from Dr. Johnson! he came on purpose to reason with me about this pamphlet, which he had heard from my father had so greatly disturbed me.

Shall I not love him more than ever? However, Miss Young[1] was just arrived, and Mr. Bremner[2] spent the evening here, and therefore he had the delicacy and goodness to forbear coming to the point. Yet he said several things that I understood, though they were unintelligible to all others; and he was more kind, more good-humoured, more flattering to me than ever. Indeed, my uneasiness upon this subject has met with more indulgence from him than from anybody. He repeatedly charged me not to fret; and bid me not repine at my success, but think of Floretta, in the Fairy Tale,[3] who found sweetness and consolation in her wit sufficient to counterbalance her scoffers and libellers! Indeed he was all good humour and kindness, and seemed quite bent on giving me comfort as well as flattery.

The next evening, just as I was dressed for my formidable visit at Sir Joshua's, I received a letter from Mrs. Thrale, the longest and most delightful she has ever written me. It contains, indeed, warm expostulations upon my uneasiness, and earnest remonstrances that I would overcome it; but that she should think me worth the trouble of reproof, and the danger of sincerity, flattered, soothed, and cheered me inexpressibly; and she speaks so affectionately of her regard for me, that I feel more convinced of it than ever.

By the way, it is settled that I am not to make my visit to Streatham till your return to town; our dear father not choosing to have us both absent at once. Nevertheless, Mrs. Thrale, whose invitations upon that plea are, with her usual good sense and propriety, dropped, or rather deferred being further pressed till your return, said in her charming letter that she must see me, if only for an hour, and insisted that I should accompany my father on his next lesson day. I could not persuade myself to go out till I wrote an answer, which I did in the fulness of my heart, and without form, ceremony, or study of any kind.

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[1] Miss Dorothy Young, a Lynn lady, who had been a friend of the first Mrs. Burney.

[2] Robert Bremner, a music printer and publisher, *d.* 1789. He issued *Rudiments of Music* in 1756.

[3] *The Fountains*, contributed by Johnson himself to Miss Williams's *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, 1766. The character of Floretta was intended for Mrs. Thrale (Hayward's *Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi* (*Thrale*), 1861, i. 55).

. . . . . .

Now to this grand visit: which was become more tremendous than ever from the pamphlet business, as I felt almost ashamed to see Sir Joshua, and could not but conclude he would think of it too.

[My mother, who changed her mind, went also. My father promised to come before the Opera was half over.]

We found the Miss Palmers alone. We were, for near an hour, quite easy, chatty, and comfortable; no pointed speech was made, and no starer entered. [But when I asked the eldest Miss Palmer if she would allow me to look at some of her drawings, she said,

"Not unless you will let me see something of yours."

"Of mine?" quoth I. "Oh, I have nothing to show."

"I am sure you have; you must have."

"No, indeed; I don't draw at all."

"Draw? No, but I mean some of your writing."

"Oh, I never write—except letters."

"Letters? those are the very things I want to see."

"Oh, not such as you mean."

"Oh now, don't say so; I am sure you are about something, and if you would but show me——"

"No, no, I am about nothing—I am quite out of conceit with writing."

I had my thoughts full of the vile *Warley.*

"You are out of conceit?" exclaimed she; "nay then, if you are, who should be otherwise!"]

Just then, Mrs. and Miss Horneck[1] were announced. You may suppose I thought directly of the one hundred and sixty miles—and may take it for granted I looked them very boldly in the face! Mrs. Horneck seated herself by my mother. Miss Palmer introduced me to her and her daughter, who seated herself next me; but not one word passed between us!

Mrs. Horneck, as I found in the course of the evening, is an exceeding sensible, well-bred woman. Her daughter is very beautiful; but was low-spirited and silent during the whole visit. She was, indeed, very unhappy, as Miss Palmer informed me, upon account of some ill news she had lately heard of the affairs of a gentleman to whom she is shortly to be married.

I have not a great many *bons mots* of my own to record, as I think I seldom opened my mouth above once in a quarter of an hour.

[Next came a Mr. Gwatkin,[2] of whom I have nothing to say, but that he was very talkative with Miss Offy Palmer, and very silent with everybody else; and that, in their talk, which on his part was all in a low voice, I more than once heard my own name pronounced in a questioning tone. For this I thanked him not.]

Not long after came a whole troop, consisting of Mr. Cholmondeley![3]—O perilous name!—Miss Cholmondeley, and Miss Fanny Cholmondeley, his daughters, and Miss Forrest. Mrs. Cholmondeley, I found, was engaged elsewhere, but soon expected.

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[1] Mary Horneck, 1754-1840, Goldsmith's "Jessamy Bride," afterwards married to Colonel Edward Gwyn, Equerry to George III. Reynolds and Hoppner both painted her.

[2] Mr. R. L. Gwatkin, who afterwards married Offy Palmer.

[3] The Hon. and Rev. Robert Cholmondeley.

Now here was a trick of Sir Joshua, to make me meet all these people!

Mr. Cholmondeley is a clergyman; nothing shining either in person or manners, but rather somewhat grim in the first, and glum in the last. Yet he appears to have humour himself, and to enjoy it much in others.

Miss Cholmondeley I saw too little of to mention.

Miss Fanny Cholmondeley is a rather pretty, pale girl; very young and inartificial, and though tall and grown up, treated by her family as a child, and seemingly well content to really think herself such. She followed me whichever way I turned, and though she was too modest to stare, never ceased watching me the whole evening.

Miss Forrest is an immensely tall and not handsome young woman. Further I know not.

Next came my father, all gaiety and spirits. Then Mr. William Burke.[1]

Soon after, Sir Joshua returned home. He paid his compliments to everybody, and then brought a chair next mine, and said,

"So, you were afraid to come among us?"

I don't know if I wrote to you a speech to that purpose, which I made to the Miss Palmers? and which, I suppose, they had repeated to him. He went on, saying I might as well fear hobgoblins, and that I had only to hold up my head to be above them all.

After this address, his behaviour was exactly what my wishes would have dictated to him, for my own ease and quietness; for he never once even alluded to my book, but conversed rationally, gaily, and serenely: and so I became more comfortable than I had been ever since the first entrance of company.

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[1] A kinsman of Edmund Burke, *d.* 1798. His character is drawn in Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, ii. 43-50.

Our subject was chiefly Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*; we had both read the same, and therefore could discuss them with equal pleasure, and we both were charmed with them, and therefore could praise them with equal warmth; and we both love and reverence the writer, and therefore could mix observations on the book and the author with equal readiness.

By the way, I believe I did not mention that Miss Palmer told me all the world gave me to Dr. Johnson, for that he spoke of me as he spoke of hardly anybody!

Our confab was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. King; a gentleman who is, it seems, for ever with the Burkes; and presently Lord Palmerston was announced.[1]

[By a change of seats, I was now next to Mrs. Horneck, who, after some general conversation with me, said in a low voice,

"I suppose, Miss Burney, I must not speak of *Evelina* to you?"

"Why, indeed, ma'am," said I, "I would rather you should speak of anything else."

"Well, I must only beg leave to say one thing, which is, that my daughters had the credit of the first introducing it into this set. Mrs. Bunbury was the very first among us who read it; she met it, accidentally, at a bookseller's, and she could not leave it behind her; and when she had read it, she sent it to me, and wrote me word she was sure I should read it, and read it through, though it was a novel; for she knew novels were not favourites with me; and indeed, they are generally so bad, that they are not to be read. But I have seen nothing like this since Fielding. But where, Miss Burney, where can, or could you pick up such characters? where find such variety of incidents, yet all so natural?"

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[1] Henry Temple, 1739-1802, second Viscount, and father of the Victorian Premier. At this date he was M.P. for Hastings.

"Oh, ma'am, anybody might find who thought them worth looking for."

. . . . . .

Well, while this was going forward, a violent rapping bespoke, I was sure, Mrs. Cholmondeley,[1] and I ran from the standers, and turning my back against the door, looked over Miss Palmer's cards; for you may well imagine, I was really in a tremor at a meeting which so long has been in agitation, and with the person who, of all persons, has been most warm and enthusiastic for my book.

She had not, however, been in the room half an instant, ere my father came up to me, and tapping me on the shoulder, said, "Fanny, here's a lady who wishes to speak to you."

I curtsied in silence, she too curtsied, and fixed her eyes full on my face: and then tapping me with her fan, she cried,

"Come, come, you must not look grave upon me."

Upon this, I te-he'd; she now looked at me yet more earnestly, and, after an odd silence, said, abruptly,

"But is it true?"

"What, ma'am?"

"It can't be!—tell me, though, is it true?"

I could only simper.

"Why don't you tell me?—but it can't be—I don't believe it!—no, you are an impostor!"

Sir Joshua and Lord Palmerston were both at her side—oh, how notably silly must I look! She again repeated her question of "Is it true?" and I again affected not to understand her; and then Sir Joshua, taking hold of her arm, attempted to pull her away, saying,

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[1] See *ante*, p. 38. Mrs. Cholmondeley—it may be observed—had been educated in France. Fanny describes her, in July 1780, as "gay, flighty, entertaining, and frisky as ever."

"Come, come, Mrs. Cholmondeley, I won't have her overpowered here!"

I love Sir Joshua much for this. But Mrs. Cholmondeley, turning to him, said, with quickness and vehemence,

"Why, I ain't going to kill her! don't be afraid, I shan't compliment her!—I can't, indeed!"

Then, taking my hand, she led me through them all, to another part of the room, where again she examined my phiz, and viewed and reviewed my whole person.

"Now," said she, "do tell me; is it true?"

"What, ma'am?—I don't—I don't know what ——"

"Pho! what,—why, you know what: in short, can you read? and can you write?"

"N—o, ma'am!"

"I thought so," cried she; "I have suspected it was a trick, some time, and now I am sure of it. You are too young by half!—it can't be!"

I laughed, and would have got away, but she would not let me.

"No," cried she, "one thing you must, at least, tell me;—are you very conceited? Come, answer me," continued she. "You won't? Mrs. Burney, Dr. Burney,—come here,—tell me if she is not very conceited?—if she is not eat up with conceit by this time?"

They were both pleased to answer "Not half enough."

"Well," exclaimed she, "that is the most wonderful part of all! Why, that is yet more extraordinary than writing the book!"

I then got away from her, and again looked over Miss Palmer's cards: but she was after me in a minute.

"Pray, Miss Burney," cried she, aloud, "do you know anything of this game?"

"No, ma'am."

"No?" repeated she; "*ma foi*, that's pity!"

This raised such a laugh, I was forced to move on; yet everybody seemed to be afraid to laugh, too, and studying to be delicate, as if they had been cautioned; which, I have since found, was really the case, and by Sir Joshua himself.

Again, however, she was at my side.

"What game do you like, Miss Burney?" cried she.

"I play at none, ma'am."

"No? I wonder at that!"

Did you ever know such a toad?[1] Again I moved on, and got behind Mr. W. Burke, who, turning round to me, said,

"This is not very politic in us, Miss Burney, to play at cards, and have you listen to our follies."

There's for you! I am to pass for a censoress now.

My frank will hold no more. Adieu, my dearest Susan.

January 11.

Your repeated call, my dear Susan, makes me once more attempt to finish my visit to Sir Joshua: but I have very much forgotten where I left off; therefore, if I am guilty of repetition or tautology, you must not much marvel.

Mrs. Cholmondeley hunted me quite round the card-table, from chair to chair, repeating various speeches of Madame Duval; and when, at last, I got behind a sofa, out of her reach, she called out aloud, "Polly, Polly! only think! miss has danced with a lord!"

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[1] See *ante*, p. 71.

Some time after, contriving to again get near me, she began flirting her fan, and exclaiming, "Well, miss, I have had a beau, I assure you! ay, and a very pretty beau too, though I don't know if his lodgings were so prettily furnished, and everything, as Mr. Smith's."

Then, applying to Mr. Cholmondeley, she said, "Pray, sir, what is become of my lottery-ticket?"

"I don't know," answered he.

I had now again made off, and, after much rambling, I at last seated myself near the card-table: but Mrs. Cholmondeley was after me in a minute, and drew a chair next mine. I now found it impossible to escape, and therefore forced myself to sit still. Lord Palmerston and Sir Joshua, in a few moments, seated themselves by us.

I must now write dialogue-fashion, to avoid the enormous length of Mrs. C.'s name.

Mrs. Chol.—I have been very ill; monstrous ill indeed; or else I should have been at your house long ago. Sir Joshua, pray how do you do? You know, I suppose, that I don't come to see you?

Sir Joshua could only laugh; though this was her first address to him.

Mrs. Chol.—Pray, miss, what's your name?

F. B.—Frances, ma'am.

Mrs. Chol.—Fanny! Well, all the Fannys are excellent! and yet,—my name is Mary! Pray, Miss Palmers, how are you?—though I hardly know if I shall speak to you to-night. I thought I should never have got here! I have been so out of humour with the people for keeping me. If you but knew, cried I, to whom I am going to-night, and who I shall see to-night, you would not dare keep me muzzing[1] here!

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[1] Stupidly loitering? (Davies, *Supplemental Glossary*). Mrs. Cholmondeley is given as the authority for this word.

During all these pointed speeches, her penetrating eyes were fixed upon me; and what could I do?—what, indeed, could anybody do, but colour and simper?—all the company watching us, though all, very delicately, avoided joining the confab.

Mrs. Chol.—My Lord Palmerston, I was told to-night that nobody could see your lordship for me, for that you supped at my house every night? Dear, bless me, no! cried I, not every night! and I looked as confused as I was able; but I am afraid I did not blush, though I tried hard for it!

Then, again, turning to me,

"That Mr. What-d'ye-call-him, in Fleet Street, is a mighty silly fellow;—perhaps you don't know who I mean?—one T. Lowndes,—but maybe you don't know such a person?"

F. B.—No, indeed, I do not!—that I can safely say.

Mrs. Chol.—I could get nothing from him: but I told him I hoped he gave a good price; and he answered me, that he always did things genteel. What trouble and tagging we had! Mr. —— (I cannot recollect the name she mentioned) laid a wager the writer was a man:—I said I was sure it was a woman: but now we are both out; for it's a girl!

In this comical, queer, flighty, whimsical manner she ran on, till we were summoned to supper; for we were not allowed to break up before: and then, when Sir Joshua and almost everybody was gone downstairs, she changed her tone, and, with a face and voice both grave, said,

"Well, Miss Burney, you must give me leave to say one thing to you; yet, perhaps you won't, neither, will you?"

"What is it, ma'am?"

"Why, it is, that I admire you more than any human being! and that I can't help!"

Then, suddenly rising, she hurried downstairs.

[While we were upon the stairs, I heard Miss Palmer say to Miss Fanny Cholmondeley, "Well, you don't find Miss Burney quite so tremendous a person as you expected?"

Sir Joshua made me sit next him at supper; Mr. William Burke was at my other side; though afterwards, I lost the Knight of Plimton, who, as he eats no suppers, made way for Mr. Gwatkin, and, as the table was crowded, stood at the fire himself. He was extremely polite and flattering in his manners towards me, and entirely avoided all mention or hint at *Evelina* the whole evening: indeed, I think I have met with more scrupulous delicacy from Sir Joshua than from anybody, although I have heard more of his approbation than of almost any other person's.

Mr. W. Burke was immensely attentive at table; but, lest he should be thought a Mr. Smith for his pains, he took care, whoever he helped, to add, "You know I am all for the ladies!"]

I was glad I was not next Mrs. Cholmondeley; but she frequently, and very provokingly, addressed herself to me; once she called out aloud, "Pray, Miss Burney, is there anything new coming out?" And another time, "Well, I wish people who *can* entertain me *would* entertain me!"

These sort of pointed speeches are almost worse than direct attacks; for there is no knowing how to look, or what to say, especially where the eyes of a whole company mark the object for whom they are meant.

To the last of these speeches I made no sort of answer: but Sir Joshua very good-naturedly turned it from me, by saying,

"Well, let every one do what they can in their different ways; do you begin yourself."

"Oh, I can't!" cried she; "I have tried, but I can't."

"Do you think, then," answered he, "that all the world is made only to entertain you?"

A very lively dialogue ensued. But I grow tired of writing. One thing, however, I must mention, which, at the time, frightened me wofully.

"Pray, Sir Joshua," asked Lord Palmerston, "what is this *Warley*[1] that is just come out?"

[Was not this a cruel question? I felt in such a twitter!]

"Why, I don't know," answered he; "but the reviewers, my Lord, speak very well of it."

Mrs. Chol.—Who wrote it?

Sir Joshua.—Mr. Huddisford.

Mrs. Chol.—Oh! I don't like it at all, then! Huddisford! What a name! [Miss Burney, pray can you conceive anything of such a name as Huddisford? I could not speak a word, and I daresay I looked no-how. But was it not an unlucky reference to me?]

Sir Joshua attempted a kind of vindication of him: but Lord Palmerston said, drily,

"I think, Sir Joshua, it is dedicated to you?"

"Yes, my Lord," answered he.

"Oh, your servant! Is it so?" cried Mrs. Cholmondeley; "then you need say no more!"

Sir Joshua laughed, and the subject, to my great relief, was dropped.

When we broke up to depart, which was not till near two in the morning, Mrs. Cholmondeley went up to my mother, and begged her permission to visit in St. Martin's Street. Then, as she left the room, she said to me, with a droll sort of threatening look,

"You have not got rid of me yet; I have been forcing myself into your house."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 158 *n*.

I must own I was not at all displeased at this, as I had very much and very reasonably feared that she would have been by then as sick of me from disappointment, as she was before eager for me from curiosity.

When we came away, Offy Palmer, laughing, said to me,

"I think this will be a breaking-in to you!"

"Ah," cried I, "if I had known of your party!"

"You would have been sick in bed, I suppose?"

I would not answer "No," yet I was glad it was over. And so concludeth this memorable evening. Yet I must tell you that I observed with much delight, that whoever spoke of the Thrales, was sure to turn to me, whence I conclude, since I am sure no puffs of mine can have caused it, that her kindness towards me has been published by herself.

I shall now skip to the Thursday following, when I accompanied my father to Streatham. We had a delightful ride, though the day was horrible.

In two minutes we were joined by Mr. Seward, and in four, by Dr. Johnson. Mr. Seward, though a reserved and cold young man, has a heart open to friendship, and very capable of good-nature and goodwill, though I believe it abounds not with them to all indiscriminately: but he really loves my father, and his reserve once, is always, conquered. He seemed heartily glad to see us both: and the dear Dr. Johnson was more kind, more pleased, and more delightful than ever. Our several meetings in town seem now to have quite established me in his favour, and I flatter myself that if he were now accused of loving me, he would not deny it, nor, as before, insist on waiting longer ere he went so far.[1]

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[1] See *ante*, p. 119.

[" I hope, Dr. Burney," cried Mr. Seward, "you are now come to stay?"

"No!" cried my father, shaking his head, "that is utterly out of my power at present."

"Well, but this fair lady" (*N.B.*—Fair and brown are synonymous terms in conversation, however opposite in looks) "I hope will stay?"

"No, no, no!" was the response, and he came to me and pressed the invitation very warmly; but Dr. Johnson, going to the window, called me from him.]

"Well, my dear," cried he, in a low voice, "and how are you now? have you done fretting? have you got over your troubles?"

"Ah, sir," quoth I, "I am sorry they told you of my folly; yet I am very much obliged to you for bearing to hear of it with so much indulgence, for I had feared it would have made you hold me cheap ever after."

"No, my dear, no! What should I hold you cheap for? It did not surprise me at all; I thought it very natural; but you must think no more of it."

F. B.—Why, sir, to say the truth, I don't know, after all, whether I do not owe the affair in part to you!

Dr. J.—To me? how so?

F. B.—Why, the appellation of "little Burney," I think, must have come from you, for I know of nobody else that calls me so.

This is a fact, Susy, and the "dear little Burney" makes it still more suspicious, for I am sure Sir Joshua Reynolds would never speak of me so facetiously after only one meeting.

Dr. Johnson seemed almost shocked, and warmly denied having been any way accessory.

"Why, sir," cried I, "they say the pamphlet was written by a Mr. Huddisford. Now I never saw, never heard of him before; how, therefore, should he know whether I am little or tall? he could not call me little by inspiration; I might be a Patagonian for anything he could tell."

Dr. J.—Pho! fiddle-faddle; do you suppose your book is so much talked of and not yourself? Do you think your readers will not ask questions, and inform themselves whether you are short or tall, young or old? Why should you put it on me?

After this he made me follow him into the library, that we might continue our confab without interruption; and just as we were seated, entered Mrs. Thrale. I flew to her, and she received me with the sweetest cordiality. They placed me between them, and we had a most delicious trio.

We talked over the visit at Sir Joshua's; and Dr. Johnson told me that Mrs. Cholmondeley was the first person who publicly praised and recommended *Evelina* among the wits. Mrs. Thrale told me that at Tunbridge and Brighthelmstone it was the universal topic; and that Mrs. Montagu had pronounced the dedication to be so well written, that she could not but suppose it must be the doctor's.

"She is very kind," quoth I, "because she likes one part better than another, to take it from me!"

"You must not mind that," said Dr. Johnson, "for such things are always said where books are successful. There are three distinct kind of judges upon all new authors or productions; the first are those who know no rules, but pronounce entirely from their natural taste and feelings; the second are those who know and judge by rules; and the third are those who know, but are above the rules. These last are those you should wish to satisfy. Next to them rate the natural judges; but ever despise those opinions that are formed by the rules."

[Mrs. Thrale wanted me much to stay all night, but it could not be; and she pressed me to come the next week, to be introduced to Miss Streatfield, who, she said, much wished the same; but these wishes only serve to chill me, for I am sure I shall always disappoint them; and therefore the minute I hear anybody desires particularly to see me, I desire particularly to avoid them!

Don't scold, Susy, for I can't help it. The idea of being an object of any attention gives me a restraint equally unconquerable and uncomfortable. I therefore entirely deferred repeating my visit till your return, for I only could have had leave for one day.

When we came home we heard that Mrs. Cholmondeley had been at our house almost all the morning, asking questions innumerable about me, and asserting that she must come to close quarters with me, ere she could satisfy her mind fully that all those characters could be my own! She said, moreover, that Lord Palmerston, hearing the authoress of *Evelina* was to be at Sir Joshua's, had begged to be invited.

But what was most charming, she said that my whole behaviour was *sat upon* afterwards, and that the jury brought in their verdict, that it was strictly proper. This, I will own, has relieved me from some very disagreeable apprehensions I had been full of, that I had certainly disappointed the whole party, and exposed myself to their ridicule.]

Last week I called on Mrs. Williams, and Dr. Johnson, who had just returned from Streatham, came downstairs to me, and was so kind! I quite dote on him; and I do really believe that, take away Mr. Crisp, there is no man out of this house who has so real and affectionate a regard for me:

and I am sure, take away the same person, I can with the utmost truth say the same thing in return.

I asked after all the Streathamites.

"Why," said he, "we now only want you—we have Miss Streatfield, Miss Brown, Murphy, and Seward—we only want you! Has Mrs. Thrale called on you lately?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah," said he, "you are such a darling!"

Mrs. Williams added a violent compliment to this, but concluded with saying,

"My only fear is lest she should put me in a book!"

"Sir Joshua Reynolds," answered Dr. Johnson, "says, that if he were conscious to himself of any trick, or any affectation, there is nobody he should so much fear as this little Burney!"

This speech he told me once before, so that I find it has struck him much; and so I suppose it did Mr. Huddisford, who, probably, has heard one similar to it.

. . . . . .

[The Sunday following, Mr. Seward drank tea, and Mr. Baretti supped here. I had a great deal of conversation with Mr. Seward about Miss Streatfield: he thinks her a very pleasing girl; but, notwithstanding her knowledge of what he calls "the crooked letters," he owned that he thought her neither bright nor deep, and rather too tender-hearted, for that she had tears at command.

Miss Brown, though far less formed and less cultivated, he said, had a better natural understanding: but she was coarse and rough.

Of whom, I wonder, would Mr. Seward speak really well? I think, altogether, he is more difficult to please as to persons than anybody I know.

He was so facetious as to propose my writing for Lady Miller's vase, and undertook to convey my verses to it.

He asked many questions of when I should go to Streatham; but said he was sure Miss Streatfield would not answer to me.

Baretti worries me about writing—asks a million of questions of how much I have written, and so forth, and when I say "Nothing," he raves and rants, and says he could beat me.

However, we had a very agreeable evening. Baretti was in a very good humour, and Mr. Seward was extremely droll and entertaining. You know *les agrémens* are all his own, when he chooses to call for them.]

And now, my dear Susan, to relate the affairs of an evening, perhaps the most important of my life. To say that, is, I am sure, enough to interest you, my dearest girl, in all I can tell you of it.

On Monday last, my father sent a note to Mrs. Cholmondeley, to propose our waiting on her the Wednesday following; she accepted the proposal, and accordingly on Wednesday evening, my father, mother, and self went to Hertford Street.

I should have told you that Mrs. Cholmondeley, when my father some time ago called on her, sent me a message, that if I would go to see her, I should not again be stared at or worried; and she acknowledged that my visit at Sir Joshua's was a formidable one, and that I was watched the whole evening; but that upon the whole, the company behaved extremely well, for they only ogled!

Well, we were received by Mrs. Cholmondeley with great politeness, and in a manner that showed she intended to entirely throw aside Madame Duval, and to conduct herself towards me in a new style.

Mr. and the Misses Cholmondeley and Miss

Forrest were with her; but who else think you?—why Mrs. Sheridan![1] I was absolutely charmed at the sight of her. I think her quite as beautiful as ever, and even more captivating; for she has now a look of ease and happiness that animates her whole face.

Miss Linley[2] was with her; she is very handsome, but nothing near her sister: the elegance of Mrs. Sheridan's beauty is unequalled by any I ever saw, except Mrs. Crewe. I was pleased with her in all respects. She is much more lively and agreeable than I had any idea of finding her; she was very gay, and very unaffected, and totally free from airs of any kind.

Miss Linley was very much out of spirits; she did not speak three words the whole evening, and looked wholly unmoved at all that passed. Indeed she appeared to be heavy and inanimate.

Mrs. Cholmondeley sat next me. She is determined, I believe, to make me like her; and she will, I believe, have full success; for she is very clever, very entertaining, and very much unlike anybody else.

The first subject started was the Opera, and all joined in the praise of Pacchierotti. Mrs. Sheridan declared she could not hear him without tears, and that he was the first Italian singer who ever affected her to such a degree.

They then talked of the intended marriage of the Duke of Dorset with Miss Cumberland, and many ridiculous anecdotes were related. The conversation naturally fell upon Mr. Cumberland, and he was finely cut up!

"What a man is that!" said Mrs. Cholmondeley: "I cannot bear him—so querulous, so dissatisfied, so determined to like nobody and nothing but himself!"

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[1] R. B. Sheridan's wife, *née* Elizabeth Ann Linley, 1754-92, an accomplished singer. At this date she had been married seven years. Reynolds had painted her as *St. Cecilia* in 1775.

[2] Mrs. Sheridan's sister, afterwards Mrs. Tickell.

"What, Mr. Cumberland?" exclaimed I.

"Yes," answered she; "I hope you don't like him?"

"I don't know him, ma'am. I have only seen him once, at Mrs. Ord's."[1]

"Oh, don't like him for your life! I charge you not! I hope you did not like his looks?"

"Why," quoth I, laughing, "I went prepared and determined to like him; but, perhaps, when I see him next, I may go prepared for the contrary."

[After this, Miss More was mentioned; and I was asked what I thought of her?

"Don't be formal with me; if you are, I shan't like you!"

"I have no hope that you will anyway!"

"Oh, fie! fie! but as to Miss More—I don't like her at all; that is, I detest her! She does nothing but flatter and fawn; and then she thinks ill of nobody. Don't you hate a person who thinks ill of nobody?"

My father then told what Dr. Johnson had said to her on the occasion of her praising him.

"This rejoices, this does me good!" cried she; "I would have given the world to have heard that. Oh, there's no supporting the company of professed flatterers. She gives me such doses of it, that I cannot endure her; but I always sit still and make no answer, but receive it as if I thought it my due: that is the only way to quiet her. She is really detestable. I hope, Miss Burney, you don't think I admire all geniuses? The only person I flatter," continued she, "is Garrick; and he likes it so much, that it pays one by the spirits it gives him. Other people that I like, I dare not flatter."]

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[1] Mrs. Ord, often mentioned hereafter, was the daughter of a surgeon named Dellingham, and a widow with means. She was one of Miss Burney's kindest friends (see *Early Diary*, 1898, ii. 139).

A rat-tat-tat-tat ensued, and the Earl of Harcourt[1] was announced. When he had paid his compliments to Mrs. Cholmondeley—

"I knew, ma'am," he said, "that I should find you at home."

"I suppose, then, my lord," said she, "that you have seen Sir Joshua Reynolds; for he is engaged to be here."

"I have," answered his lordship; "and heard from him that I should be sure to find you."

And then he added some very fine compliment, but I have forgot it.

"Oh, my lord," cried she, "you have the most discernment of anybody! His lordship (turning another way) always says these things to me, and yet he never flatters."

Lord Harcourt, speaking of the lady from whose house he was just come, said,

"Mrs. Vesey is vastly agreeable,[2] but her fear of ceremony is really troublesome; for her eagerness to break a circle is such, that she insists upon everybody's sitting with their backs one to another; that is, the chairs are drawn into little parties of three together, in a confused manner, all over the room."

"Why, then," said my father, "they may have the pleasure of caballing and cutting up one another, even in the same room."

"Oh, I like the notion of all things," cried Mrs. Cholmondeley, "I shall certainly adopt it!"

And then she drew her chair into the middle of our circle. Lord Harcourt turned his round, and his back to most of us, and my father did the same. You can't imagine a more absurd sight.

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[1] George Simon, second Earl, 1736-1809.

[2] Mrs. Elizabeth Vesey, of "Blue-Stocking" celebrity, 1715-91, the second wife of Agmondesham Vesey, M.P., a member of the Literary Club. Between 1770 and 1784, Mrs. Vesey's literary parties (which Walpole called "Babels") were much frequented. At this date she lived in Bolton Street, Piccadilly.

Just then the door opened, and Mr. Sheridan[1] entered.

Was I not in luck? Not that I believe the meeting was accidental; but I had more wished to meet him and his wife than any people I know not.

I could not endure my ridiculous situation, but replaced myself in an orderly manner immediately. Mr. Sheridan stared at them all, and Mrs. Cholmondeley said she intended it as a hint for a comedy.

Mr. Sheridan has a very fine figure, and a good though I don't think a handsome face. He is tall, and very upright, and his appearance and address are at once manly and fashionable, without the smallest tincture of foppery or modish graces. In short, I like him vastly, and think him every way worthy his beautiful companion.

And let me tell you what I know will give you as much pleasure as it gave me,—that, by all I could observe in the course of the evening, and we stayed very late, they are extremely happy in each other: he evidently adores her, and she as evidently idolises him. The world has by no means done him justice.

When he had paid his compliments to all his acquaintance, he went behind the sofa on which Mrs. Sheridan and Miss Cholmondeley were seated, and entered into earnest conversation with them.

Upon Lord Harcourt's again paying Mrs. Cholmondeley some compliment, she said,

"Well, my lord, after this I shall be quite sublime for some days! I shan't descend into common life till—till Saturday, and then I shall drop into the vulgar style—I shall be in the *ma foi* way."

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[1] Richard Brinsley Sheridan, 1751-1816. He had just produced the *School for Scandal* at Drury Lane (1777).

I do really believe she could not resist this, for she had seemed determined to be quiet.

When next there was a rat-tat, Mrs. Cholmondeley and Lord Harcourt, and my father again, at the command of the former, moved into the middle of the room, and then Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Warton[1] entered.

No further company came. You may imagine there was a general roar at the breaking of the circle, and when they got into order, Mr. Sheridan seated himself in the place Mrs. Cholmondeley had left, between my father and myself.

And now I must tell you a little conversation which I did not hear myself till I came home; it was between Mr. Sheridan and my father.

"Dr. Burney," cried the former, "have you no older daughters? Can this possibly be the authoress of *Evelina*?"

And then he said abundance of fine things, and begged my father to introduce him to me.

"Why, it will be a very formidable thing to her," answered he, "to be introduced to you."

"Well then, by and by," returned he.

Some time after this, my eyes happening to meet his, he waived the ceremony of introduction, and in a low voice said,

"I have been telling Dr. Burney that I have long expected to see in Miss Burney a lady of the gravest appearance, with the quickest parts."

I was never much more astonished than at this unexpected address, as among all my numerous puffers the name of Sheridan has never reached me, and I did really imagine he had never deigned to look at my trash.

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[1] Joseph Warton, D.D., 1722-1800, author of the *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, 1756-82, and Head Master of Winchester, where Fanny's brother Dick was at school.

Of course I could make no verbal answer, and he proceeded then to speak of *Evelina* in terms of the highest praise; but I was in such a ferment from surprise (not to say pleasure), that I have no recollection of his expressions. I only remember telling him that I was much amazed he had spared time to read it, and that he repeatedly called it a most surprising book; and sometime after he added, "But I hope, Miss Burney, you don't intend to throw away your pen?"

"You should take care, sir," said I, "what you say: for you know not what weight it may have."

He wished it might have any, he said, and soon after turned again to my father.

I protest, since the approbation of the Streathamites, I have met with none so flattering to me as this of Mr. Sheridan, and so very unexpected.

[Sir Joshua then came up to me, and after some general conversation said,

"Pray, do you know anything of the *Sylph*?"

This is a novel, lately advertised by Lowndes. Mr. Hutton has already been with me to inquire if it was mine.

"No," quoth I.

"Don't you, upon your honour?"

"Upon my honour?—did you suspect me?"

"Why, a friend of mine sent for it upon suspicion."

"So did we," said Miss Linley, "but I did not suspect after I had read it."

"What is the reason," said Sir Joshua, "that Lowndes always advertises it with *Evelina*?"

"Indeed I know nothing about it."

"Ma'am," cried Mr. Sheridan, turning to me abruptly, "you should send and order him not,—it is a take-in, and ought to be forbid"; and with great vehemence he added, "it is a most impudent thing in that fellow!"

I assure you I took it quite kind in him to give me this advice. By the way, Mrs. Thrale has sent me a message to the same purpose.[1]]

About this time Mrs. Cholmondeley was making much sport, by wishing for an acrostic on her name. She said she had several times begged for one in vain, and began to entertain thoughts of writing one herself.

"For," said she, "I am very famous for my rhymes, though I never made a line of poetry in my life."

"An acrostic on your name," said Mr. Sheridan, "would be a formidable task; it must be so long that I think it should be divided into cantos."

"Miss Burney," cried Sir Joshua, who was now reseated, "are not you a writer of verses?"

F. B.—No, sir.

Mrs. Chol.—Oh, don't believe her. I have made a resolution not to believe anything she says.

Mr. Sheridan.—I think a lady should not write verses till she is past receiving them.

Mrs. Chol. (rising and stalking majestically towards him).—Mr. Sheridan, pray, sir, what may you mean by this insinuation; did I not say I writ verses?

Mr. Sheridan.—Oh, but you——

Mrs. Chol.—Say no more, sir! You have made your meaning but too plain already. There now, I think that's a speech for a tragedy!

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[1] The following was accordingly written to Lowndes: "Dr. Burney sends his Compts. to Mr. Lowndes and acquaints him that by the manner in which *Evelina* has for some time been advertised in Company with the *Sylph*, it has generally been imagined that both these Novels have been written by one and the same Author. Now, as Mr. Lowndes must be *certain* that they are the works of different authors, and as accident has now made the Author of *Evelina* pretty generally known, who by no means wishes to rob the writer of the *Sylph* of whatever praise may be his due, Dr. B. begs Mr. L. will not only cease to advertise these books in an equivocal way, but inform the Public in *some clear and decisive manner* that they are the work of two different writers. St. Martin's Street, January 27 [1779]" (*MS. in Archdeacon Burney's possession*).

Some time after, Sir Joshua returning to his standing-place, entered into confab with Miss Linley and your slave, upon various matters, during which Mr. Sheridan, joining us, said,

"Sir Joshua, I have been telling Miss Burney that she must not suffer her pen to lie idle—ought she?"

Sir Joshua.—No, indeed, ought she not.

Mr. Sheridan.—Do you then, Sir Joshua, persuade her. But perhaps you have begun something? May we ask? Will you answer a question candidly?

F. B.—I don't know, but as candidly as *Mrs. Candour*[1] I think I certainly shall.

Mr. Sheridan.—What then are you about now?

F. B.—Why, twirling my fan, I think!

Mr. Sheridan.—No, no; but what are you about at home? However, it is not a fair question, so I won't press it.

Yet he looked very inquisitive; but I was glad to get off without any downright answer.

Sir Joshua.—Anything in the dialogue way, I think, she must succeed in; and I am sure invention will not be wanting.

Mr. Sheridan.—No, indeed; I think, and say, she should write a comedy.

Sir Joshua.—I am sure I think so; and hope she will.

I could only answer by incredulous exclamations.

"Consider," continued Sir Joshua, "you have already had all the applause and fame you can have given you in the closet; but the acclamation of a theatre will be new to you."

And then he put down his trumpet, and began a violent clapping of his hands.

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[1] In the *School for Scandal.*

I actually shook from head to foot! I felt myself already in Drury Lane, amidst the hubbub of a first night.

"Oh no!" cried I, "there may be a noise, but it will be just the reverse." And I returned his salute with a hissing.

Mr. Sheridan joined Sir Joshua very warmly.

"Oh, sir!" cried I, "you should not run on so,—you don't know what mischief you may do!"

Mr. Sheridan.—I wish I may—I shall be very glad to be accessory.

Sir Joshua.—She has, certainly, something of a knack at characters;—where she got it, I don't know,—and how she got it, I can't imagine; but she certainly has it. And to throw it away is——

Mr. Sheridan.—Oh, she won't,—she will write a comedy,—she has promised me she will!

F. B.—Oh!—if you both run on in this manner, I shall——

I was going to say get under the chair, but Mr. Sheridan, interrupting me with a laugh, said,

"Set about one? very well, that's right!"

"Ay," cried Sir Joshua, "that's very right. And you (to Mr. Sheridan) would take anything of hers, would you not?—unsight, unseen?"

What a point-blank question! who but Sir Joshua would have ventured it!

"Yes," answered Mr. Sheridan, with quickness, "and make her a bow and my best thanks into the bargain."

Now, my dear Susy, tell me, did you ever hear the fellow to such a speech as this!—it was all I could do to sit it.

"Mr. Sheridan," I exclaimed, "are you not mocking me?"

"No, upon my honour! this is what I have meditated to say to you the first time I should have the pleasure of seeing you."

To be sure, as Mrs. Thrale says, if folks are to be spoilt, there is nothing in the world so pleasant as spoiling! But I was never so much astonished, and seldom have been so much delighted, as by this attack of Mr. Sheridan. Afterwards he took my father aside, and formally repeated his opinion that I should write for the stage, and his desire to see my play,—with encomiums the most flattering of *Evelina*.

And now, my dear Susy, if I should attempt the stage, I think I may be fairly acquitted of presumption, and however I may fail, that I was strongly pressed to try by Mrs. Thrale, and by Mr. Sheridan, the most successful and powerful of all dramatic living authors, will abundantly excuse my temerity.

In short,—this evening seems to have been decisive; my many and increasing scruples all gave way to encouragement so warm, from so experienced a judge, who is himself interested in not making such a request *par complaisance.* Some time after, Sir Joshua beckoned to Dr. Warton to approach us, and said,

"Give me leave, Miss Burney, to introduce Dr. Warton to you."

We both made our reverences, and then Sir Joshua, who was now quite facetious, said, laughing,

"Come, Dr. Warton, now give Miss Burney your opinion of—something,—tell her what is your opinion of—a certain book."

This was very provoking of Sir Joshua, and Dr. Warton seemed as much embarrassed as myself; but, after a little hesitation, he very politely said,

"I have no opinion to give—I can only join in the voice of the public."

I have no more time nor room to go on, or I could write you a folio of the conversation at supper, when everybody was in spirits, and a thousand good things were said: I sat between Sir Joshua and Miss Linley. Mrs. Cholmondeley addressed almost all her *bons mots* and drolleries to me, and was flattering in her distinction to a degree; yet did not, as at our first meeting, overpower me.

PART V

1779

Diary resumed—Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson—Sir Philip Clerke—Whigs and Tories—A political discussion—Liberality of Dr. Johnson—Murphy, the dramatist—He urges Miss Burney to write a comedy—Table-talk between Johnson, Murphy, Mrs. Thrale, and Miss Burney—Country neighbours—Goldsmith—Tears at will—Letter from Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—The Mæcenases of the day—Diary resumed—Visit to Brighton—Brighton society in 1779—A grand dinner-party—A character—The Bishop of Peterborough—An evening party—Wealth and ennui—Queen Dido—News from home—An order from headquarters—Military discipline—Captain Crop—Dr. Delap—Mr. Murphy—Cross-examination—The Bishop of Winchester—Return to Streatham—Illness of Mr. Thrale—Sir Philip Clerke—*Evelina*—A learned lady—Table-talk—Tears at will—The man of indifference—Taste in dress—Raillery—Affectation—*Candide*—Pococurante—Dr. Middleton—A weeping beauty—Table-talk—Intended journey to Spa—Projected comedy—A scene—Ennui—Sir Richard Jebb—Lady Anne Lindsay—Learned ladies—Dr. Johnson.

Streatham, February.—I have been here so long, my dearest Susan, without writing a word, that now I hardly know where or how to begin. But I will try to draw up a concise account of what has passed for this last fortnight, and then endeavour to be more minute.

Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson vied with each other in the kindness of their reception of me. Mr. Thrale was, as usual at first, cold and quiet, but soon, as usual also, warmed into sociality.

The next day Sir Philip Jennings Clerke came.[1] He is not at all a man of letters, but extremely well-bred, nay, elegant, in his manners, and sensible and agreeable in his conversation. He is a professed minority man, and very active and zealous in the opposition. He had, when I came, a bill in agitation concerning contractors—too long a matter to explain upon paper—but which was levelled against bribery and corruption in the ministry, and which he was to make a motion upon in the House of Commons the next week.

Men of such different principles as Dr. Johnson and Sir Philip, you may imagine, cannot have much sympathy or cordiality in their political debates; however, the very superior abilities of the former, and the remarkable good breeding of the latter, have kept both upon good terms; though they have had several arguments, in which each has exerted his utmost force for conquest.

The heads of one of their debates I must try to remember, because I should be sorry to forget. Sir Philip explained his bill; Dr. Johnson at first scoffed it; Mr. Thrale betted a guinea the motion would not pass, and Sir Philip, that he should divide a hundred and fifty upon it.

[I am afraid, my dear Susan, you already tremble at this political commencement, but I will soon have done, for I know your taste too well to enlarge upon this theme.]

Sir Philip, addressing himself to Mrs. Thrale, hoped she would not suffer the Tories to warp her judgment, and told me he hoped my father had not tainted my principles; and then he further explained his bill, and indeed made it appear so equitable, that Mrs. Thrale gave in to it, and wished her husband to vote for it. He still hung back; but, to our general surprise, Dr. Johnson, having made more particular inquiries into its merits, first softened towards it, and then declared it a very rational and fair bill, and joined with Mrs. Thrale in soliciting Mr. Thrale's vote.

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[1] He was M.P. for Totnes, and, according to Boswell, who met him later at Thrale's, a highly picturesque personage. "Sir Philip had the appearance of a gentleman of ancient family, well advanced in life. He wore his own white hair in a bag of goodly size, a black velvet coat, with an embroidered waistcoat, and very rich laced ruffles. . . . 'Ah, Sir (said Johnson), ancient ruffles and modern principles do not agree'" (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. pp. 80-81).

Sir Philip was, and with very good reason, quite delighted. He opened upon politics more amply, and freely declared his opinions, which were so strongly against the Government, and so much bordering upon the Republican principles, that Dr. Johnson suddenly took fire; he called back his recantation, begged Mr. Thrale not to vote for Sir Philip's bill, and grew very animated against his antagonist.

"The bill," said he, "ought to be opposed by all honest men! in itself, and considered simply, it is equitable, and I would forward it; but when we find what a faction it is to support and encourage, it ought not to be listened to. All men should oppose it who do not wish well to sedition!"

These, and several other expressions yet more strong, he made use of; and had Sir Philip had less unalterable politeness, I believe they would have had a vehement quarrel. He maintained his ground, however, with calmness and steadiness, though he had neither argument nor wit at all equal to such an opponent.

Dr. Johnson pursued him with unabating vigour and dexterity, and at length, though he could not convince, he so entirely baffled him, that Sir Philip was self-compelled to be quiet—which, with a very good grace, he confessed.

Dr. Johnson then, recollecting himself, and thinking, as he owned afterwards, that the dispute grew too serious, with a skill all his own, suddenly and unexpectedly turned it to burlesque; and taking Sir Philip by the hand at the moment we arose after supper, and were separating for the night.

"Sir Philip," said he, "you are too liberal a man for the party to which you belong; I shall have much pride in the honour of converting you; for I really believe, if you were not spoiled by bad company, the spirit of faction would not have possessed you. Go, then, sir, to the House, but make not your motion! Give up your Bill, and surprise the world by turning to the side of truth and reason. Rise, sir, when they least expect you, and address your fellow-patriots to this purpose:—Gentlemen, I have, for many a weary day, been deceived and seduced by you. I have now opened my eyes; I see that you are all scoundrels—the subversion of all government is your aim. Gentlemen, I will no longer herd among rascals in whose infamy my name and character must be included. I therefore renounce you all, gentlemen, as you deserve to be renounced."

Then, shaking his hand heartily, he added,

"Go, sir, go to bed; meditate upon this recantation, and rise in the morning a more honest man than you laid down."[1]

. . . . . .

Now I must try to be rather more minute. On Thursday, while my dear father was here, who should be announced but Mr. Murphy; the man of all other strangers to me whom I most longed to see.

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[1] Mr. Thrale must have won his bet. "*March* 10 . . . *Sir Ph. J. Cl—ke* brought forward the bill for excluding contractors with government from sitting in the house; which was rejected by a majority of 41" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1779, p. 575). But see *post*, April 24, 1782.

He is tall and well made, has a very gentleman-like appearance, and a quietness of manner upon his first address that, to me, is very pleasing. His face looks sensible, and his deportment is perfectly easy and polite.

When he had been welcomed by Mrs. Thrale, and had gone through the reception-salutations of Dr. Johnson and my father, Mrs. Thrale, advancing to me, said,

"But here is a lady I must introduce to you, Mr. Murphy: here is another F. B."

"Indeed!" cried he, taking my hand; "is this a sister of Miss Brown's?"

"No, no; this is Miss Burney."

"What!" cried he, staring, "is this—is this—this is not the lady that—that——"

"Yes, but it is," answered she, laughing.

"No, you don't say so? You don't mean the lady that——"

"Yes, yes, I do; no less a lady, I assure you."

He then said he was very glad of the honour of seeing me; and I sneaked away.

When we came upstairs, Mrs. Thrale charged me to make myself agreeable to Mr. Murphy.

"He may be of use to you, in what I am most eager for—your writing a play: he knows stage business so well; and if you will but take a fancy to one another, he may be more able to serve you than all of us put together. My ambition is that Johnson should write your prologue, and Murphy your epilogue; then I shall be quite happy."

At tea-time, when I went into the library, I found Dr. Johnson reading, and Mrs. Thrale in close conference with Mr. Murphy.

"It is well, Miss Burney," said the latter, "that you have come, for we were abusing you most vilely; we were in the very act of pulling you to pieces."

"Don't you think her very like her father?" said Mrs. Thrale.

"Yes: but what a sad man is Dr. Burney for running away so! how long had he been here?"

Mrs. Thrale.—Oh, but an hour or two. I often say Dr. Burney is the most of a male coquet of any man I know; for he only gives one enough of his company to excite a desire for more.

Mr. Murphy.—Dr. Burney is, indeed, a most extraordinary man; I think I don't know such another: he is at home upon all subjects, and upon all so agreeable! he is a wonderful man!"

And now let me stop this conversation, to go back to a similar one with Dr. Johnson, who, a few days since, when Mrs. Thrale was singing our father's praise, used this expression:

"I love Burney: my heart goes out to meet him!"

"He is not ungrateful, sir," cried I; "for most heartily does he love you."

"Does he, madam? I am surprised at that."

"Why, sir? why should you have doubted it?"

"Because, madam, Dr. Burney is a man for all the world to love: it is but natural to love him."

I could almost have cried with delight at this cordial, unlaboured *éloge*. Another time, he said,

"I much question if there is, in the world, such another man as Dr. Burney."

But to return to the tea-table.

"If I," said Mr. Murphy, looking very archly, "had written a certain book—a book I won't name, but a book I have lately read—I would next write a comedy."

"Good," cried Mrs. Thrale, colouring with pleasure;[1] "do you think so too?"

"Yes, indeed; I thought so while I was reading it; it struck me repeatedly."

"Don't look at me, Miss Burney," cried Mrs. Thrale; "for this is no doing of mine. Well, I do wonder what Miss Burney will do twenty years hence, when she can blush no more; for now she can never bear the name of her book."

Mr. Murphy.—Nay, I name no book; at least no author: how can I, for I don't know the author; there is no name given to it: I only say, whoever wrote that book ought to write a comedy. Dr. Johnson might write it for aught I know.

F. B.—Oh yes!

Mr. Murphy.—Nay, I have often told him he does not know his own strength, or he would write a comedy; and so I think.

Dr. Johnson (laughing).—Suppose Burney and I begin together?

Mr. Murphy.—Ah, I wish you would! I wish you would Beaumont and Fletcher us!

F. B.—My father asked me, this morning, how my head stood. If he should have asked me this evening, I don't know what answer I must have made.

Mr. Murphy.—I have no wish to turn anybody's head: I speak what I really think;—comedy is the forte of that book. I laughed over it most violently: and if the author—I won't say who (all the time looking away from me)—will write a comedy, I will most readily, and with great pleasure, give any advice or assistance in my power.

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[1] It is difficult to imagine Mrs. Thrale, who habitually over-rouged, contriving to colour with pleasure (Hayward's *Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi* (*Thrale*), 1861, i. 43).

"Well, now you are a sweet man!" cried Mrs. Thrale, who looked ready to kiss him. "Did not I tell you, Miss Burney, that Mr. Murphy was the man?"

Mr. Murphy.—All I can do, I shall be very happy to do; and at least, I will undertake to say I can tell what the sovereigns of the upper gallery will bear: for they are the most formidable part of an audience. I have had so much experience in this sort of work, that I believe I can always tell what will be hissed at least. And if Miss Burney will write, and will show me——

Dr. Johnson.—Come, come, have done with this now; why should you overpower her? Let's have no more of it. I don't mean to dissent from what you say; I think well of it, and approve of it; but you have said enough of it.

Mr. Murphy, who equally loves and reverences Dr. Johnson, instantly changed the subject.

The rest of the evening was delightful. Mr. Murphy told abundance of most excellent stories; Dr. Johnson was in exceeding good humour; and Mrs. Thrale all cheerfulness and sweetness.

For my part, in spite of her injunctions, I could not speak; I was in a kind of consternation. Mr. Murphy's speeches, flattering as they were, made me tremble; for I cannot get out of my head the idea of disgracing so many people.

After supper, Dr. Johnson turned the discourse upon silent folks—whether by way of reflection and reproof, or by accident, I know not; but I do know he is provoked with me for not talking more; and I was afraid he was seriously provoked; but, a little while ago, I went into the music-room, where he was *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Thrale, and calling me to him, he took my hand, and made me sit next him, in a manner that seemed truly affectionate.

"Sir," cried I, "I was much afraid I was going out of your favour!"

"Why so? what should make you think so?"

"Why, I don't know—my silence, I believe. I began to fear you would give me up."

"No, my darling!—my dear little Burney, no. When I give you up——"

"What then, sir?" cried Mrs. Thrale.

"Why, I don't know; for whoever could give her up would deserve worse than I can say; I know not what would be bad enough."

Streatham, Tuesday.—On my return hither, my dearest Susy, Mrs. Thrale received Dick with her usual kindness, and in the evening we went to visit the P——'s.

Miss Thrale, Miss P——, and myself, after tea, retired to have some talk among ourselves, which of all things in the world, is most stupid with these sort of misses (I mean the P——'s, not Miss Thrale), and we took Dick with us, to make sport.

Dick, proud of the office, played the buffoon extremely well, and our laughs reaching to the company-room, we were followed by a Mr. D——, a poor half-witted clergyman. Dick played his tricks over again, and, mad with spirits and the applause of the young ladies, when he had done, he clapt Mr. D—— on the back, and said,

"Come, sir, now you do something to divert the ladies."

"No, sir, no; I really can't," answered he.

"What, sir!" cried Dick, "not if the ladies request you? why, then you'll never do for Mr. Smith! You a'n't half so clever as Mr. Smith; and I'm sure you'll never be a Sir Clement Willoughby!"[1]

Did you ever hear the like? I was forced to turn myself quite away, and poor Mr. D—— was thunderstruck at the boy's assurance. When he recovered himself, he said to me,

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[1] Sir Clement Willoughby is the "agreeable rake" of *Evelina*.

"Ma'am, this is a very fine young gentleman—pray what book is he in?"

"Do you mean at school, sir?"

"No; I mean what books does he study at home besides his grammar?"

"Indeed I don't know; you must examine him."

"No? Don't you know Latin, ma'am?"

"No, indeed; not at all!"

"Really? Well, I had heard you did."

I wonder, my dear Susy, what next will be said of me!

Yesterday, at night, I told Dr. Johnson the inquiry, and added that I attributed it to my being at Streatham, and supposed the folks took it for granted nobody would be admitted there without knowing Latin, at least.

"No, my dear, no," answered he; "the man thought it because you have written a book—he concluded that a book could not be written by one who knew no Latin. And it is strange that it should—but, perhaps you do know it—for your shyness, and slyness, and pretending to know nothing, never took me in, whatever you may do with others. I always knew you for a toadling."

At our usual time of absconding, he would not let us go, and was in high good humour; and when, at last, Mrs. Thrale absolutely refused to stay any longer, he took me by the hand, and said,

"Don't you mind her, my little Burney; do you stay whether she will or not."

So away went Mrs. Thrale, and left us to a *tête-à-tête.*

Now I had been considering that perhaps I ought to speak to him of my new castle,[1] lest hereafter he should suspect that I preferred the counsel of Mr. Murphy. I therefore determined to take this opportunity, and, after some general nothings, I asked if he would permit me to take a great liberty with him?

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[1] Query—in the air.

He assented with the most encouraging smile. And then I said,

"I believe, sir, you heard part of what passed between Mr. Murphy and me the other evening, concerning—a—a comedy. Now, if I should make such an attempt, would you be so good as to allow me, any time before Michaelmas, to put it in the coach, for you to look over as you go to town?"

"To be sure, my dear!—What, have you begun a comedy then?"[1]

I told him how the affair stood. He then gave me advice which just accorded with my wishes, viz., not to make known that I had any such intention; to keep my own counsel; not to whisper even the name of it; to raise no expectations, which were always prejudicial, and, finally, to have it performed while the town knew nothing of whose it was.

I readily assured him of my hearty concurrence in his opinion; but he somewhat distressed me when I told him that Mr. Murphy must be in my confidence, as he had offered his services, by desiring he might be the last to see it.

What I shall do, I know not, for he has, himself, begged to be the first. Mrs. Thrale, however, shall guide me between them. He spoke highly of Mr. Murphy, too, for he really loves him. He said he would not have it in the coach, but that I should read it to him; however, I could sooner drown or hang!

When I would have offered some apology for the attempt, he stopped me, and desired I would never make any.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 90.

"For," said he, "if it succeeds, it makes its own apology, if not——"

"If not," quoth I, "I cannot do worse than Dr. Goldsmith, when his play failed,—go home and cry!"[1]

He laughed, but told me, repeatedly (I mean twice, which, for him, is very remarkable) that I might depend upon all the service in his power; and, he added, it would be well to make Murphy the last judge, "for he knows the stage," he said, "and I am quite ignorant of it."

Afterwards, grasping my hand with the most affectionate warmth, he said,

"I wish you success! I wish you well! my dear little Burney!"

When, at length, I told him I could stay no longer, and bid him good-night, he said, "There is none like you, my dear little Burney! there is none like you!—good-night, my darling!"

[You, my dearest Susy, who know so well how proud I am of his kindness, will, for that reason, think it not ill-bestowed; but I very often and very unaffectedly wonder at it myself.]

Yesterday morning Miss Brown made a visit here. Mrs. Thrale, unluckily, was gone to town. But I am become quite intimate with her. She is a most good-humoured, frank, unaffected, sociable girl, and I like her very much. She stayed, I believe, three hours. We had much talk of Mr. Murphy, whom she adores, and whose avowed preference of her to Miss Streatfield has quite won her heart. We also talked much of Dr. Johnson, and she confessed to me that both she and Miss S. S. were in fevers in his presence, from apprehension.

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[1] This is apparently a reference to the story told by Mrs. Piozzi of Goldsmith's behaviour after the first night of the *Good Natur'd Man* (Hill's *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, 1897, i. 311; Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*).

"But," said she, "a lady of my acquaintance asked me, some time ago, if I knew you; I said no, for then I had not had the honour of seeing you. 'Well,' said she, 'but I hear Dr. Johnson is quite devoted to her; they say that he is grown quite polite, and waits upon her, and gets her her chair, and her tea, and pays her compliments from morning to night.' I was quite glad to hear it, for we agreed it would quite harmonise him."

I forgot to mention that, when I told Dr. Johnson Mr. Murphy's kind offer of examining my plan, and the several rules he gave me, and owned that I had already gone too far to avail myself of his obliging intention, he said, "Never mind, my dear,—ah! you'll do without,—you want no rules."

Tuesday Night.—Before they went, Miss Streatfield came. Mrs. Thrale prevailed upon her to stay till the next day.

I find her a very amiable girl, and extremely handsome; not so wise as I expected, but very well; however, had she not chanced to have had so uncommon an education, with respect to literature or learning, I believe she would not have made her way among the wits by the force of her natural parts.

Mr. Seward, you know, told me that she had tears at command, and I begin to think so too, for when Mrs. Thrale, who had previously told me I should see her cry, began coaxing her to stay, and saying "If you go, I shall know you don't love me so well as Lady Gresham,"—she did cry, not loud indeed, nor much, but the tears came into her eyes, and rolled down her fine cheeks.

"Come hither, Miss Burney," cried Mrs. Thrale, "come and see Miss Streatfield cry!"

I thought it a mere *badinage*. I went to them, but when I saw real tears, I was shocked, and saying, "No, I won't look at her," ran away frightened, lest she should think I laughed at her, which Mrs. Thrale did so openly, that, as I told her, had she served me so, I should have been affronted with her ever after.

Miss Streatfield, however, whether from a sweetness not to be ruffled, or from not perceiving there was any room for taking offence, gently wiped her eyes, and was perfectly composed!

FROM MISS F. BURNEY TO MR. CRISP

STREATHAM, *March* 1779.

The kindness and honours I meet with from this charming family are greater than I can mention; sweet Mrs. Thrale hardly suffers me to leave her a moment; and Dr. Johnson is another Daddy Crisp to me, for he has a partial goodness to your Fannikin, that has made him sink the comparative shortness of our acquaintance, and treat and think of me as one who had long laid claim to him.

If you knew these two you would love them, or I don't know you so well as I think I do. Dr. Johnson has more fun, and comical humour, and love of nonsense about him, than almost anybody I ever saw: I mean when with those he likes; for otherwise, he can be as severe and as bitter as report relates him. Mrs. Thrale has all that gaiety of disposition and lightness of heart, which commonly belong to fifteen. We are, therefore, merry enough, and I am frequently seized with the same tittering and ridiculous fits as those with which I have so often amazed and amused poor Kitty Cooke.

One thing let me not omit of this charming woman, which I believe will weigh with you in her favour; her political doctrine is so exactly like yours, that it is never started but I exclaim, "Dear ma'am, if my Daddy Crisp was here, I believe between you, you would croak me mad!" And this sympathy of horrible foresight not a little contributes to incline her to believe the other parts of speech with which I regale her concerning you. She wishes very much to know you, and I am sure you would hit it off comfortably; but I told her what a vile taste you had for shunning all new acquaintance, and shirking almost all your old ones. That I may never be among the latter, heartily hopes my dear daddy's ever affectionate and obliged, F. B.

Best love to Mrs. Ham[1] and dear Kitty.

THE SAME TO THE SAME

STREATHAM, *May* 4, 1779.

OH! MY DEAR DADDY—Ah!—alas!—woe is me!—In what terms may I venture to approach you? I don't know, but the more I think of it, the more guilty I feel. I have a great mind, instead of tormenting you with apologies, and worrying myself with devising them, to tell you the plain, honest, literal truth. Indeed, I have no other way any chance of obtaining your forgiveness for my long silence. Honestly, then, my time has, ever since the receipt of your most excellent letter, been not merely occupied, but burthened, with much employment. I have lived almost wholly at Streatham, and the little time I have spent at home, has been divided between indispensable engagements, and preparations for returning hither.

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[1] Mrs. Hamilton. See Editor's Introduction, p. 11.

But you will say there is no occasion to exert much honesty in owning this much; therefore now to the secret of the disposal of my private hours. The long and the short is, I have devoted them to writing, and I have finished a play.[1] I must entreat you, my dearest daddy, to keep this communication to yourself, or, at least, if you own it to Kitty, whose long friendship for me I am sure deserves my confidence, make her vow not to reveal it to anybody whatsoever.

This is no capricious request, as I will explain; my own secret inclination leads me forcibly and involuntarily to desire concealment; but that is not all, for Dr. Johnson[2] himself enjoins it; he says, that nothing can do so much mischief to a dramatic work as previous expectation, and that my wisest way will be to endeavour to have it performed before it is known, except to the managers, to be written.

I am extremely sorry you decline my three characters at a time, as I have nothing better to offer you. Journal I have kept none, nor had any time for such sort of writing. In my absences from Susan, I have, indeed, occasionally made essays in that style; but they are very imperfect, uncertain, and abrupt. However, such sketches as she has had I will borrow of her for you, if, after all my transgression, you are not sick both of me and my affairs.

The paragraph you saw in the papers concerning a lady's first attempt in the dramatic walk, meant a Miss Richardson, of Tower Hill, who has just brought out a play called *The Double Deception.*[3]

I wish with all my heart it was in my power to take a trip to Chessington for a few days; I have so many things I long to talk over, and I wish so sincerely to see you again. The homely home, as you call it, will never be forgotten while I keep aloof from my last home.

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[1] *The Witlings*, see *post*, July 1779.

[2] See *ante*, p. 208.

[3] *The Double Deception*, 1779, a comedy, was produced at Drury Lane, ran four nights, and was not printed.

But I forgot to mention, that another and a very great reason for secrecy in regard to my new attempt, is what you have yourself mentioned—avoiding the interference of the various Mæcenases who would expect to be consulted. Of these, I could not confide in one without disobliging all the rest; and I could not confide in all, without having the play read all over the town before it is acted. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Greville, Mrs. Crewe, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mrs. Cholmondeley, and many inferior etc.'s, think they have an equal claim, one with the other, to my confidence: and the consequence of it all would be, that, instead of having it, in your words, all my own, and all of a piece, everybody would have a stroke at it, and it would become a mere patchwork of all my acquaintance. The only way to avoid this, is to keep to myself that such a thing exists. Those to whom I have owned it seem all of the same opinion, and I am resolutely determined to own it no more.

Evelina continues to sell in a most wonderful manner; a fourth edition is preparing, with cuts, designed by Mortimer just before he died, and executed by Hall and Bartolozzi.[1]

Journal resumed

Streatham, Friday, May. — Once more, my dearest Susy, I will attempt journalising, and

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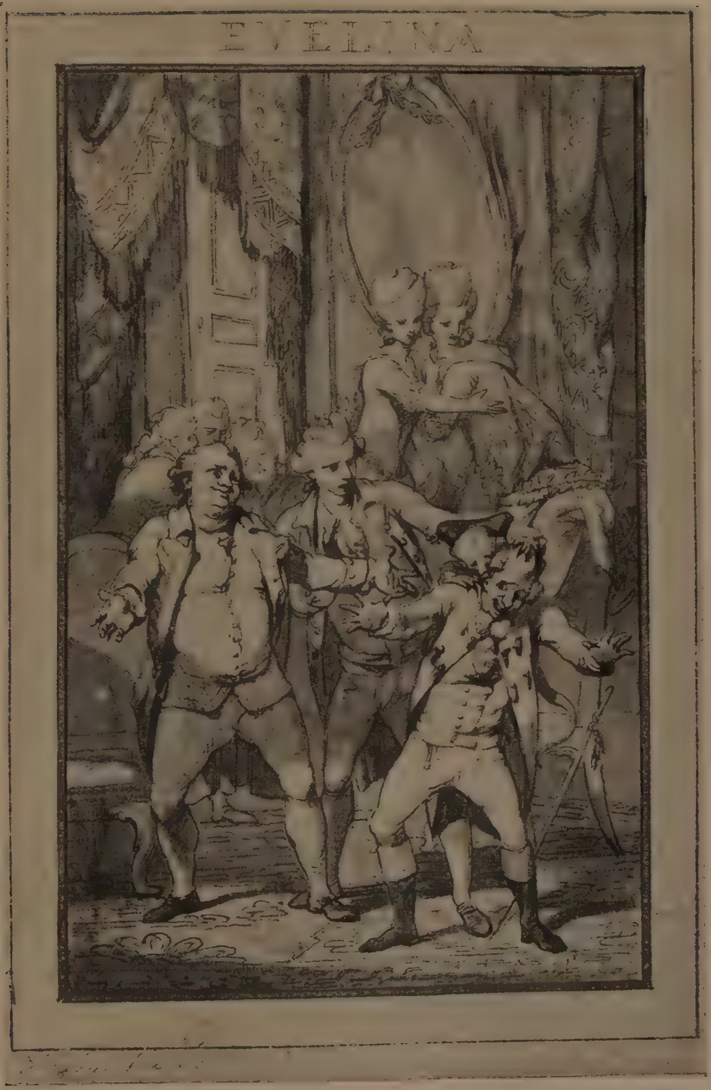
[1] John Hamilton Mortimer, A.R.A., *d.* February 4, 1779. His drawings, three in number, and still existent, were engraved by Bartolozzi, Hall, and Walker. The plates are dated November 24, 1779, after which time the fourth edition must have appeared. Lowndes, the publisher, gave £73 for them, being £43 more than he had given for the book they "embellished."



Frontispiece to Vol. III. of *Evelina*, 1779

endeavour, according to my promise, to keep up something of the kind during our absence, however brief and curtailed.

[We took up Sir Philip Jennings Clerke at some coffee-house in our way, and two armed men met us at the Piccadilly turnpike, and, so guarded, we got there very safe, but not till past one in the morning. Sir Philip left us the next day at noon, but we shall see him again when we return from Brighthelmstone.]

To-day, while Mrs. Thrale was chatting with me in my room, we saw Mr. Murphy drive into the courtyard. Downstairs flew Mrs. Thrale, but, in a few minutes, up she flew again, crying,

"Mr. Murphy is crazy for your play—he won't let me rest for it—do pray let me run away with the first act."

Little as I like to have it seen in this unfinished state, she was too urgent to be resisted, so off she made with it.

I did not show my phiz till I was summoned to dinner. Mr. Murphy, probably out of flummery, made us wait some minutes, and, when he did come, said,

"I had much ado not to keep you all longer, for I could hardly get away from some new acquaintances I was just making."

As he could not stay to sleep here, he had only time, after dinner, to finish the first act. He was pleased to commend it very liberally; he has pointed out two places where he thinks I might enlarge, but has not criticised one word; on the contrary, the dialogue he has honoured with high praise.

So far is well: what may be yet to come, I know not. Further particulars I shall write to my dear Padre himself.

Oh—but—shall I tell you something?—yes,

though you won't care a fig; but I have had my lesson in Latin.[1] Dr. Johnson tutored Miss Thrale while I was with you, and was set off for Litchfield before I came; but Mrs. Thrale attended the lecture, and has told me every word of it she could recollect: so we must both be ready for him against his return. I heartily wish I rejoiced more sincerely in this classical plan. But the truth is, I have more fear of the malignity which will follow its being known, than delight in what advantages it may afford. All my delight, indeed, is that this great and good man should think me worthy his instructions.

Brighthelmstone,[2] *May* 26.—I have not had a moment for writing, my dear Susy, since I came hither, till now, for we have been perpetually engaged either with sights or company; for notwithstanding this is not the season, here are folks enough to fill up time from morning to evening.

The road from Streatham hither is beautiful; Mr., Mrs., Miss Thrale, and Miss Susan Thrale, and I, travelled in a coach, with four horses, and two of the servants in a chaise, besides two men on horseback; so we were obliged to stop for some time at three places on the road.[3]

Reigate, the first town, is a very old, half-ruined borough, in a most neglected condition. A high hill, leading to it, afforded a very fine prospect, of the Malvern Hill nature, though inferior.

[We amused ourselves while we waited here, at a bookseller's shop, where Mrs. Thrale inquired if they had got the book she had recommended to them. "Yes, ma'am," was the answer, "and it's always out,—the ladies like it vastly." I suppose I need not tell you what it was?]

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[1] These Latin lessons were soon discontinued.

[2] The old name for Brighton. But the writer uses both (see *post*, June 10, 1780).

[3] This gives a good idea of the former methods of travelling.

At Cuckfield, which is in Sussex, and but fourteen miles hence, we dined.

[It is a clean and pretty town, and we passed all the time we rescued from eating in the churchyard, where I copied four epitaphs in my tablets,—and you shall have them.

First:

Lord, thou hast pointed out my life
In length much like a span;
My age was nothing unto Thee,
So vain is every man.

The second was:

An indulgent husband, and friend sincere,
And a neighbourly man lies buried here.

The third was upon a young wife:

Not twelve months were passed after our wedding day,
But death in come, and from a loving husband took me away.

The fourth, upon a young couple, who both died soon after marriage:

Repent in time, make no delay,
We after each other were soon called away.

So, you see, the dabblers have not been idle in the noble town of Cuckfield.]

The view of the South Downs from Cuckfield to this place is very curious and singular. We got home by about nine o'clock. Mr. Thrale's house is in West Street,[1] which is the court end of the town here as well as in London. 'Tis a neat, small house, and I have a snug, comfortable room to myself. The sea is not many yards from our windows. Our journey was delightfully pleasant, the day being heavenly, the roads in fine order, the prospects charming, and everybody good-humoured and cheerful.

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[1] It is No. 64 in the *Brighthelmston Directory* for 1800, when it belonged to Esther Thrale (Queenie). There is a sketch of it at page 7 of Bishop's *Brighton in the Olden Time*, 1892.

. . . . . .

Thursday.—We pass our time here most delectably. This dear and most sweet family grow daily more kind to me; and all of them contrive to make me of so much consequence, that I can now no more help being easy than, till lately, I could help being embarrassed. Mrs. Thrale has, indeed, from the first moment of our acquaintance, been to me all my heart could wish; and now her husband and daughter gain ground in my good grace and favour every day.

Just before we went to dinner, a chaise drove up to the door, and from it issued Mr. Murphy. He met with a very joyful reception; and Mr. Thrale, for the first time in his life, said he was "a good fellow": for he makes it a sort of rule to salute him with the title of "scoundrel," or "rascal." They are very old friends; and I question if Mr. Thrale loves any man so well.

[He made me many very flattering speeches, of his eagerness to go on with my play, to know what became of the several characters, and to what place I should next conduct them; assuring me that the first act had run in his head ever since he had read it.]

In the evening we all adjourned to Major H——'s, where, besides his own family, we found Lord Mordaunt, son to the Earl of Peterborough, —a pretty, languid, tonnish young man; Mr. Fisher, who is said to be a scholar, but is nothing enchanting as a gentleman; young Fitzgerald, as much the thing as ever; and Mr. Lucius Concannon.

Mr. Murphy was the life of the party: he was in good spirits, and extremely entertaining; he told a million of stories, admirably well; but stories won't do upon paper, therefore I shall not attempt to present you with them.

This morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Mr. Murphy said, "I must now go to the seat by the seaside, with my new set of acquaintance, from whom I expect no little entertainment."

"Ay," said Mrs. Thrale, "and there you'll find us all! I believe this rogue means me for *Lady Smatter*; but *Mrs. Voluble*[1] must speak the epilogue, Mr. Murphy."

"That must depend upon who performs the part," answered he.

"Don't talk of it now," cried I, "for Mr. Thrale knows nothing of it."

"I think," cried Mr. Murphy, "you might touch upon his character in *Censor*."[2]

"Ay," cried Mr. Thrale, "I expect a knock some time or other; but, when it comes, I'll carry all my myrmidons to catcall it!"

Mr. Murphy then made me fetch him the second Act, and marched off with it.

We had a very grand dinner to-day (though nothing to a Streatham dinner) at the Ship Tavern,[3] where the officers mess, to which we were invited by the major and captain. All the officers I have mentioned, and three or four more, the H——'s, Miss Forth, Lord Mordaunt, Messieurs Murphy, Fisher, and Fitzgerald, Dr. Delap,[4] and our own party, made an immensely formidable appearance.

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[1] These are characters in *The Witlings.*

[2] A character in *The Witlings.*

[3] The Old Ship Tavern in Ship Street (No. 46), at this date kept by John Hicks. It was the business house of the town.

[4] Dr. John Delap, 1725-1812, incumbent of Wool Lavington, Sussex. He was writing a play called *Macaria* on the story of the widow and daughter of Hercules, probably that produced at Drury Lane in 1781 as *The Royal Suppliants*, and based upon the *Heraclidæ* of Euripides. See *post*, pp. 222, 224.

Dr. Delap arrived in the morning, and is to stay two days. He is too silent for me to form much judgment of his companionable talents, and his appearance is snug and reserved. Mrs. Thrale is reading his play, and likes it much. It is to come out next season. It is droll enough that there should be, at this time, a tragedy and comedy in exactly the same situation, placed so accidentally in the same house.

We afterwards went on the parade, where the soldiers[1] were mustering, and found Captain Fuller's men all half intoxicated, and laughing so violently as we past by them, that they could hardly stand upright. The captain stormed at them most angrily; but, turning to us said, "These poor fellows have just been paid their arrears, and it is so unusual to them to have a sixpence in their pockets, that they know not how to keep it there."

The wind being extremely high, our caps and gowns were blown about most abominably; and this increased the risibility of the merry light infantry. Captain Fuller's desire to keep order made me laugh, as much as the men's incapacity to obey him; for, finding our flying drapery provoked their mirth, he went up to the biggest grinner, and, shaking him violently by the shoulders, said, "What do you laugh for, sirrah? do you laugh at the ladies?" and, as soon as he had given the reprimand, it struck him to be so ridiculous, that he was obliged to turn quick round, and commit the very fault he was attacking most furiously.

. . . . . .

I broke off where we were all assembled on Thursday,—which, by the way, is exactly opposite to the inn in which Charles II. hid himself after the battle of Worcester, previously to his escaping from the kingdom.[1] So I fail not to look at it with loyal satisfaction: and his black-wigged majesty has, from the time of the Restoration, been its sign.

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[1] The Sussex militia. See *post*, p. 223.

After tea, the bishop,[2] his lady, Lord Mordaunt, and Mrs. H—— seated themselves to play at whist; and Mr. Murphy, coming up to me, said,

"I have had no opportunity, Miss Burney, to tell you how much I have been entertained this morning, but I have a great deal to say to you about it; I am extremely pleased with it, indeed. The dialogue is charming; and the——"

"What's that?" cried Mrs. Thrale. "Mr. Murphy always flirting with Miss Burney? And here, too, where everybody's watched!"

And she cast her eyes towards Mrs. H——, who is as censorious a country lady as ever locked up all her ideas in a country town. She has told us sneering anecdotes of every woman and every officer in Brighthelmstone.

Mr. Murphy, checked by Mrs. Thrale's exclamation, stopt the conversation, and said he must run away, but would return in half-an-hour.

"Don't expect, however, Miss Burney," he said, "I shall bring with me what you are thinking of; no, I can't part with it yet!"

"What! at it again!" cried Mrs. Thrale. "This flirting is incessant; but it's all to Mr. Murphy's credit."

Mrs. Thrale told me afterwards, that she made these speeches to divert the attention of the company from our subject; for that she found they were all upon the watch the moment Mr. Murphy addressed me, and that the bishop and his lady almost threw down their cards, from eagerness to discover what he meant.

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[1] The King's Head in West Street (No. 8); but its connection with his "black-wigged majesty" is very doubtful.

[2] Bishop of Peterborough. See *post*, p. 222.

I am now more able to give you some sketch of Dr. Delap; and as he is coming into the world next winter, in my own walk, and, like me, for the first time, you may shake us together when I have drawn him, and conjecture our fates.

He is commonly and naturally grave, silent, and absent; but when any subject is once begun upon which he has anything to say, he works it threadbare, yet hardly seems to know, when all is over, what, or whether anything, has passed. He is a man, as I am told by those who know, of deep learning, but totally ignorant of life and manners. As to his person and appearance, they are much in the John-trot[1] style. He seems inclined to be particularly civil to me; but not knowing how, according to the general forms, he has only shown his inclination by perpetual offers to help me at dinner, and repeated exclamations at my not eating more profusely.

So much for my brother-dramatist.

The supper was very gay: Mrs. Thrale was in high spirits, and her wit flashed with incessant brilliancy; Mr. Murphy told several stories with admirable humour; and the Bishop of Peterborough was a worthy third in contributing towards general entertainment. He turns out most gaily sociable. Mrs. H. was discussed, and, poor lady, not very mercifully.

Mrs. Thrale said she lived upon the Steyn, for the pleasure of viewing, all day long, who walked with who, how often the same persons were seen together, and what visits were made by gentlemen to ladies, or ladies to gentlemen.

"She often tells me," said the captain, "of my men. 'Oh,' she says, 'Captain Fuller, your men are always after the ladies!'"

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[1] "John-Trot" is used here for "commonplace," "ordinary." The phrase is employed by Foote, Chesterfield, Walpole, and Goldsmith.

"Nay," cried Mrs. Thrale, "I should have thought the officers might have contented her; but if she takes in the soldiers too, she must have business enough!"

"Oh, she gets no satisfaction by her complaints; for I only say, 'Why, ma'am, we are all young!—all young and gay!—and how can we do better than follow the ladies?'"

"After all," returned Mrs. Thrale, "I believe she can talk of nothing else, and therefore we must forgive her."

Friday, May 28.

In the morning, before breakfast, came Dr. Delap; and Mrs. Thrale, in ambiguous terms, complimented him upon his play, and expressed her wish that she might tell me of it; upon which hint he instantly took the manuscript from his pocket, and presented it to me, begging me, at the same time, to tell him of any faults that I might meet with in it.

There, Susy! am I not grown a grand person; not merely looked upon as a writer, but addressed as a critic! Upon my word this is fine!

. . . . . .

By the way, it is really amazing the fatigue these militia officers go through, without compulsion or interest, to spur them. Major H. is a man of at least £8000 a year, and has a noble seat in this county, and quits ease, pleasure, retirement in the country, and public diversions in London, to take the charge of the Sussex militia! Captain Fuller, too, has an estate of £4000 or £5000 a year—is but just of age—has figure, understanding, education, vivacity, and independence—and yet voluntarily devotes almost all his time, and almost all his attention, to a company of light infantry.

Instances such as these, my dear Susy, ought to reconcile all the penniless sons of toil and industry to their cares and labours; since those whom affluence invites to all the luxuries of indolence, sicken of those very gifts which the others seem only to exist to procure.

. . . . . .

As soon as we returned home, I seized Dr. Delap's play. It is called *Macaria.* Mr. Thrale, who frequently calls me *Queen Dido,* from a notion that I resemble an actress in France who performed that part,[1] and from a general idea of my having a theatrical turn, was mightily diverted at this oddly-timed confidence of Dr. Delap, and, tapping at my door, called out, "*Queen Dido,* what! rehearsing still? Why, I think you should tip the doctor the same compliment!"

I could only read the first Act before dinner. Mrs. Thrale came to me while I was dressing, and said, "Murphy is quite charmed with your second Act: he says he is sure it will do, and more than do. He has been talking of you this half-hour: he calls you a sly designing body, and says you look all the people through most wickedly; he watches you, and vows he has caught you in the fact. Nobody and nothing, he says, escapes you, and you keep looking round for characters all day long. And Dr. Delap has been talking of you."

"I hope he does not suspect the play?"

"Why, he would not tell!"

"Oh, but I should be sorry to put it in his power!"

"Why, he's such an absent creature, that if he were to hear it to-day he would forget it to-morrow."

"No, as he is engaged in the same pursuit himself at this very time, I believe he would remember it."

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[1] Perhaps Mlle. Clairon, who was great as "Dido," or Mlle. Dumesnil, from whom Mrs. Woffington learned so much.

"Well, it's too late, however, now, for he knows it; but I did not tell him; Murphy did; he broke out into praises of the second Act before him. But he'll tell nobody, depend upon it," continued she; "it only put him upon asking one a hundred questions about you, and singing your praise; he has teased me all the morning about your family, and how many sisters and brothers you have, and if you were Dr. Burney's daughter, and a million more inquiries."

. . . . . .

During dinner, I observed that Mr. Murphy watched me almost incessantly, with such archness of countenance that I could hardly look at him, and Dr. Delap did the same, with an earnestness of gravity that was truly solemn—till Mr. Murphy, catching my eye, said,

"We have been talking of you—ask Mrs. Thrale what I say of you—I have found out your schemes, shy as you are. Dr. Delap, too, heard how I discovered you."

"Oh, but Dr. Delap," answered Mrs. Thrale, "is the best man in the world for discoveries—for he'll forget every word by to-morrow—shan't you, Dr. Delap?"

"Not Miss Burney!" cried the doctor gallantly, "I'm sure I shan't forget Miss Burney!"

When Mrs. Thrale gave the signal for our leaving the gentlemen, Dr. Delap, as I past him, said in a whisper, "Have you read it?"

"No, not quite."

"How do you like it?"

I could make but one answer. How strangely ignorant of the world is this good clergyman, to ask such a question so abruptly!

We were engaged to finish the evening at Major

H——'s, but as I feared hurting Dr. Delap by any seeming indifference, I begged Mrs. Thrale to let me stay at home till I had read his play, and, therefore, the rest of the party went before me.

I had, however, only three Acts in my possession. The story is of the daughter and widow of Hercules — and, indeed, I liked the play much better than I expected to do. The story is such as renders the author's ignorance of common life and manners not very material, since the characters are of the Heroic age, and therefore require more classical than worldly knowledge, and, accordingly, its only resemblance is to the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles.

Saturday, May 29.

[Early in the morning, the kind Mrs. Thrale brought me your letter, saying, "Here,—here's news from home! My master would have had me keep it till breakfast; but I told him he did not love you so well as I did; he vowed that was not true,—but it's plain it was, for I was in most haste to make you happy."]

After breakfast, Mrs. and Miss Thrale took me to Widget's, the milliner and library-woman on the Steyn. After a little dawdling conversation, Captain Fuller came in to have a little chat. He said he had just gone through a great operation—"I have been," he said, "cutting off the hair of all my men."

"And why?"

"Why, the Duke of Richmond[1] ordered that it should be done, and the fellows swore that they would not submit to it,—so I was forced to be the operator myself. I told them they would look as smart again when they had got on their caps; but it went much against them, they vowed, at first, they would not bear such usage; some said they would sooner be run through the body, and others, that the Duke should as soon have their heads. I told them I would soon try that, and fell to work myself with them."

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[1] Charles Lennox, 1735-1806, third Duke of Richmond and Lennox, was Lord-Lieutenant of Sussex.

"And how did they bear it?"

"Oh, poor fellows, with great good-nature, when they found his honour was their barber: but I thought proper to submit to hearing all their oaths, and all their jokes; for they had no other comfort but to hope I should have enough of it, and such sort of wit. Three or four of them, however, escaped, but I shall find them out. I told them I had a good mind to cut my own hair off too, and then they would have a Captain Crop. I shall soothe them to-morrow with a present of new feathers for all their caps."

[Presently we were joined by Dr. Delap and Mr. Murphy. The latter, taking me aside, said,

"Has Mrs. Thrale told you what I said?"

"I don't know,—she has told me some odd sort of—nonsense, I was going to say."

"But, do you know the name I have settled to call you by?"

"No."

"Miss Slyboots!—that is exactly the thing!—Oh, you are a wicked one!—I have found you out!"

"Oh, to be sure! but pray, now, don't tell such a name about, for if you give it, it will soon spread."

Then he began upon the second Act; but I feared being suspected, and stole away from him.]

Different occupations, in a short time, called away all our gentlemen but Dr. Delap; and he, seating himself next me, began to question me about his tragedy. I soon said all I wanted to say upon the subject,—and, soon after, a great deal more,—but not soon after was he satisfied; he returned to the same thing a million of times, asked the same questions, exacted the same compliments, and worked at the same passages, till I almost fell asleep with the sound of the same words; and at last, with what little animation was left me, I contrived to make Miss Thrale propose a walk on the Steyn, and crawling out of the shop, I sought,—and found,—revival from the breezes. [Yet not before he had planned a meeting at Streatham, where a council, composed of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Murphy, and Mrs. Thrale are to sit upon the play for oral judgment, and where, at his express desire, I am to make one. This is to take place some time before the Spa journey.

Sunday, May 30.—Just as I was finishing my attire for dinner, I saw Captain Fuller drive past my window in his phaeton, and stop at the door. He had not time to alight. I went downstairs as soon as I was ready, and found the three Thrales, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Michell crowding the door to take leave of him. He kissed his hand to me with a military air, and wishing me good-morning, drove away. I mention this because it comes into play afterwards.

In the middle of the dinner, Mr. Michell, who had scarce opened his mouth to me twice before, turned to me abruptly, and very gravely said:

"Pray, Miss Burney, where is Captain Fuller going?"

"To London, I believe, sir."

"Dear," said Mrs. Thrale, "how odd Mr. Michell is! what should make him ask Miss Burney?"

"Why, ma'am," said he, "a very obvious reason,—I thought her most likely to know."

"And why should you think that, sir?" quoth I.

"Because I observed he would not go till he had seen you. I saw very plainly—he is a fine young man, and I think——"

"I think," cried Mrs. Thrale, "he could not show his taste more! And he is so amiable and so sensible, that I wish neither Queeny, nor Miss Burney, nor Miss Brown worse luck."

"It is presumed, ma'am," said Mr. Michell, "that he is now gone to town to wait upon Dr. Burney,—such, at least, is the Brighthelmstone report."

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "but seriously though — before you came down, when I said, remember you are engaged at Streatham for the 10th, 11th, and 12th, he said, 'Will Miss Burney be there?'"

What strange and absurd rubbish!

Sunday evening we had the bishop, his lady, and Mr. Murphy; and Right Reverend and all were most outrageously merry.

Dr. Delap is returned to Lewes; and he bored Mr. Murphy and Miss Thrale by asking so many questions of how I came to write *Evelina*, and why I writ it at all, and what set me on, and other such curious inquiries, that, at last, they almost lost all patience with him.]

Streatham, June 12.—Now, my dear Susan, hard and fast—let me write up to the present time.

I left you all, as you truly say, on Saturday, in no very high spirits. Mrs. Thrale's visible uneasiness and agitation quite alarmed me. I dared ask her no questions; but, soon after we drove off, Sir Philip Clerke gently and feelingly led to the subject, and, in the course of our ride, got from her all the particulars of poor Mr. Thrale's dreadful and terrifying attack.

I find, with true concern, that it was undoubtedly a paralytic stroke. He was taken ill at his sister's, Mrs. Nesbitt's,[1] during dinner; he did not absolutely fall, but his head sank upon the table, and, as soon as he was able to raise it, they found that his reason had left him; he talked wildly, and seemed to know nobody. Mrs. Nesbitt brought him home; he was much better before Dr. Bromfield could be fetched; yet, for three days afterwards, his senses, at intervals, were frightfully impaired.

When we stopped here, Sir Philip immediately went to Mr. Thrale, but I ran past the door, and up to my own room, for I quite dreaded seeing him till I had prepared myself to meet him without any seeming concern, as I was told that he was extremely suspicious of being thought in any danger. I dawdled away about an hour, and then asked Miss Thrale to accompany me into the parlour.

Mr. Thrale was there, with Sir Philip, Mr. Seward, and Captain Fuller. I endeavoured to enter, and behave as if nothing had happened. I saw Mr. Thrale fix his eyes upon me with an inquisitive and melancholy earnestness, as if to read my opinion: indeed, his looks were vastly better than I expected, but his evident dejection quite shocked me. I did not dare go up to him, for if he had offered to shake hands with me, I believe I should have been unable to disguise my concern; for, indeed, he has of late made himself a daily increasing interest in my regard and kind wishes. I, therefore, turned short from him, and, pretending earnest talk with Miss Thrale, went to one of the windows.

At dinner everybody tried to be cheerful; but a dark and gloomy cloud hangs over the head of poor Mr. Thrale which no flashes of merriment or beams of wit can pierce through; yet he seems pleased that everybody should be gay, and desirous to be spoken to, and of, as usual.

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[1] Mrs. Nesbitt (afterwards Mrs. Scott). Thrale had three other sisters, Mrs. Rice, Lady Lade, and Mrs. Plumbe.

[At tea we had the company of Dr. and Mrs. Parker. I think I have mentioned them before. By chance I was about ten minutes alone with the Doctor in the parlour, who, with a formality that accompanies whatever he says, slowly observed,

"So, they are gone,—and I am now left alone with thee, Evelina!"

I instantly started some other subject, in order to stop him; but, with the same gravity, he, nevertheless, chose to continue.

"You have gained great esteem, great esteem, indeed, in the world, by that performance!"

"The world," cried I, "is sometimes taken with a very kind fit; I'm sure it has in regard to that poor book!"

'No, not so,—only with a judicious fit!"

And then he proceeded with formal compliments till we were joined by the rest of the company.

After tea the Parkers left us, and we walked round the grounds. We now walk as much as possible, in order to seduce Mr. Thrale to take exercise, which is not only the best, but the only thing for him.]

Sunday, June 13.—After church, we all strolled round the grounds, and the topic of our discourse was Miss Streatfield. Mrs. Thrale asserted that she had a power of captivation that was irresistible; that her beauty, joined to her softness, her caressing manners, her tearful eyes, and alluring looks, would insinuate her into the heart of any man she thought worth attacking.

Sir Philip declared himself of a totally different opinion, and quoted Dr. Johnson against her, who had told him that, taking away her Greek, she was as ignorant as a butterfly.

Mr. Seward declared her Greek was all against her with him, for that, instead of reading Pope, Swift, or the *Spectator*—books from which she might derive useful knowledge and improvement—it had led her to devote all her reading time to the first eight books of Homer.

"But," said Mrs. Thrale, "her Greek, you must own, has made all her celebrity;—you would have heard no more of her than of any other pretty girl, but for that."

"What I object to," said Sir Philip, "is her avowed preference for this parson.[1] Surely it is very indelicate in any lady to let all the world know with whom she is in love!"

"The parson," said the severe Mr. Seward, "I suppose, spoke first,—or she would as soon have been in love with you, or with me!"

You will easily believe I gave him no pleasant look. He wanted me to slacken my pace, and tell him, in confidence, my private opinion of her; but I told him, very truly, that as I knew her chiefly by account, not by acquaintance, I had not absolutely formed my opinion.

"Were I to live with her four days," said this odd man, "I believe the fifth I should want to take her to church."

"You'd be devilish tired of her, though," said Sir Philip, "in half a year. A crying wife will never do!"

"Oh yes," cried he, "the pleasure of soothing her would make amends."

"Ah," cried Mrs. Thrale, "I would insure her power of crying herself into any of your hearts she pleased. I made her cry to Miss Burney,[2] to show how beautiful she looked in tears."

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[1] Dr. W. Vyse, rector of Lambeth. See *post*, vol. ii. under date Friday, January 10, 1783.

[2] See *ante*, p. 210.

"If I had been her," said Mr. Seward, "I would never have visited you again."

"Oh, but she liked it," answered Mrs. T., "for she knows how well she does it. Miss Burney would have run away, but she came forward on purpose to show herself. I would have done so by nobody else; but Sophy Streatfield is never happier than when the tears trickle from her fine eyes in company."

"Suppose, Miss Burney," said Mr. Seward, "we make her the heroine of our comedy?[1] and call it 'Hearts have at ye all!'"

"Excellent!" cried I, "it can't be better."

"Tell me, then—what situations you will have? But stay, I have another name that I think will do very well for a comedy,—'Everything a Bore.'"[2]

"Oh, mighty well! and you shall be the hero!" cried I.

"Well said, Miss Burney!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "and pray let his name be *Mr. Chagrin*."

Well, indeed, did she name him; for I think his *ennui*, his sickness of the world and its inhabitants, grows more and more obvious every day. He is, indeed, a melancholy instance of the inefficacy of fortune, talents, education, wit, and benevolence united, to render any man happy whose mind has not a native disposition of content.

At dinner we had three persons added to our company,—my dear father, Miss Streatfield, and Miss Brown.

Well-selected, gay, good-humoured, and uncommonly agreeable as was the whole society, the day failed of being happy; for Mr. Thrale's extreme seriousness and lowness, and Mrs. Thrale's agitated and struggling cheerfulness, spread a degree of gravity and discomfort over us, that, though they prevented not partial and occasional sallies, totally banished our accustomed general and continued gaiety.

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[1] See *post*, p. 241.

[2] This sounds like an anticipation of Charles Mathews's *Used Up*.

Miss Brown, however, as you may remember I foresaw, proved the queen of the day. Miss Streatfield requires longer time to make conquests. She is, indeed, much more really beautiful than Fanny Brown; but Fanny Brown is much more showy, and her open, good-humoured, gay, laughing face inspires an almost immediate wish of conversing and merry-making with her. Indeed, the two days she spent here have raised her greatly in my regard. She is a charming girl, and so natural, and easy, and sweet-tempered, that there is no being half an hour in her company without ardently wishing her well.

Monday, June 14, proved far more lively and comfortable. Mr. Thrale daily looks somewhat better; and his sweet wife's natural spirits and happiness insensibly, though not uniformly, return.

At breakfast, our party was Sir Philip, Mr. Fuller, Miss Streatfield, Miss Brown, the Thrales, and I.

The first office performed was dressing Miss Brown. She had put on bright jonquil ribbons. Mrs. Thrale exclaimed against them immediately; Mr. Fuller half joined her, and away she went, and brought green ribbons of her own, which she made Miss Brown run upstairs with to put on. This she did with the utmost good-humour: but dress is the last thing in which she excels; for she has lived so much abroad, and so much with foreigners at home, that she never appears habited as an Englishwoman, nor as a high-bred foreigner, but rather as an Italian opera-dancer; and her wild, careless, giddy manner, her loud hearty laugh, and general negligence of appearance, contribute to give her that air and look. I like her so much, that I am quite sorry she is not better advised, either by her own or some friend's judgment.

Miss Brown, however, was queen of the breakfast: for though her giddiness made everybody take liberties with her, her good-humour made everybody love her, and her gaiety made everybody desirous to associate with her. Sir Philip played with her as with a young and sportive kitten; Mr. Fuller laughed and chatted with her; and Mr. Seward, when here, teases and torments her. The truth is, he cannot bear her, and she, in return, equally fears and dislikes him, but still she cannot help attracting his notice.

We then all walked out, and had a very delightful stroll: but, in returning, one of the dogs (we have twelve, I believe, belonging to the house) was detected pursuing the sheep on the common. Miss Thrale sent one of the men after him, and he was seized to be punished. The poor creature's cries were so dreadful, that I took to my feet and ran away.

When, after all was over, they returned to the house, the saucy Captain Fuller, as soon as he saw me, exclaimed, "Oh, some hartshorn! some hartshorn for Miss Burney!"

I instantly found he thought me guilty of affectation; and the drollery of his manner made it impossible to be affronted with his accusation; therefore I took the trouble to try to clear myself, but know not how I succeeded. I assured him that if my staying could have answered any purpose, I would have compelled myself to hear the screams, and witness the correction, of the offending animal; but that as that was not the case, I saw no necessity for giving myself pain officiously.

"But I'll tell you," cried he, "my reason for not liking that ladies should run away from all disagreeable sights: I think that if they are totally unused to them, whenever any accident happens, they are not only helpless, but worse, for they scream and faint, and get out of the way; when, if they were not so frightened, they might be of some service. I was with a lady the other day, when a poor fellow was brought into her house half-killed: but, instead of doing him any good, she only shrieked, and called out—'Oh! mercy on me!' and ran away."

There was an honesty so characteristic in this attack, that I took very serious pains to vindicate myself, and told him that, if I had any knowledge of myself, I could safely affirm that, in any case similar to what he mentioned, instead of running away, I should myself, if no abler person were at hand, have undertaken not merely to see, but to bind the man's wounds: nor, indeed, can I doubt but I should.

While we were dressing, Mr. Seward returned; he had postponed his journey to Cornwall; and, before dinner, Dr. Delap arrived from Lewes.

Mr. Seward's *ennui* coming under consideration, Mrs. Thrale asked us if he was not the *Pococurante*[1] in *Candide*.

Not one of us had read it.

"What!" cried Mr. Seward, "have not you, Miss Burney?"

"No, never."

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "I am quite amazed at that! I did not expect Dr. Delap or Sophy Streatfield to have read it; but how you missed it I do wonder."

"Miss Streatfield," said Mr. Seward, "I dare-say, never reads but in form—finishes one book before she will look at another, and spreads a green cloth on her table, and sets to it in earnest."

"Perhaps," said Dr. Delap, "Miss Burney, like

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[1] Signor Pococuranté, a noble Venetian, is Voltaire's type of indifference (*Candide*, 1759, ch. xxv.).

Dr. Middleton, is in a course of reading, so goes on regularly."

"No, no," cried Mrs. Thrale, "that is not her way; she is a very desultory reader."

"I daresay she is," said Mr. Seward, "and that makes her so clever."

Candide was then produced, and Mrs. Thrale read aloud the part concerning *Pococurante*; and really the cap fitted so well, that Mr. Seward could not attempt to dispute it.

Wednesday, June 16.—We had, at breakfast, a scene, of its sort, the most curious I ever saw.

The persons were Sir Philip, Mr. Seward, Dr. Delap, Miss Streatfield, Mrs. and Miss Thrale, and I.

The discourse turning, I know not how, upon Miss Streatfield, Mrs. Thrale said,

"Ay, I made her cry once for Miss Burney as pretty as could be:[1] but nobody does cry so pretty as the S. S. I'm sure, when she cried for Seward, I never saw her look half so lovely."

"For Seward?" cried Sir Philip; "did she cry for Seward? What a happy dog! I hope she'll never cry for me, for, if she does, I won't answer for the consequences!"

"Seward," said Mrs. Thrale, "had affronted Johnson, and then Johnson affronted Seward, and then the S. S. cried."

"Oh," cried Sir Philip, "that I had but been here!"

"Nay," answered Mrs. Thrale, "you'd only have seen how like three fools three sensible persons behaved: for my part, I was quite sick of it, and of them, too."

Sir Philip.—But what did Seward do? was he not melted?

Mrs. Thrale.—Not he; he was thinking only of his own affront, and taking fire at that.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 210.

Mr. Seward.—Why, yes, I did take fire, for I went and planted my back to it.

S. S.—And Mrs. Thrale kept stuffing me with toast-and-water.

Sir Philip.—But what did Seward do with himself? Was not he in ecstasy? What did he do, or say?

Mr. Seward.—Oh, I said pho, pho, don't let's have any more of this,—it's making it of too much consequence: no more piping, pray.

Sir Philip.—Well, I have heard so much of these tears, that I would give the universe to have a sight of them.

Mrs. Thrale.—Well, she shall cry again if you like it.

S. S.—No, pray, Mrs. Thrale.

Sir Philip.—Oh, pray do! pray let me see a little of it.

Mrs. Thrale.—Yes, do cry a little, Sophy (in a wheedling voice), pray do! Consider, now, you are going to-day, and it's very hard if you won't cry a little: indeed, S. S., you ought to cry.

Now for the wonder of wonders. When Mrs. Thrale, in a coaxing voice, suited to a nurse soothing a baby, had run on for some time,—while all the rest of us, in laughter, joined in the request,—two crystal tears came into the soft eyes of the S. S., and rolled gently down her cheeks! Such a sight I never saw before,[1] nor could I have believed. She offered not to conceal or dissipate them: on the contrary, she really contrived to have them seen by everybody. She looked, indeed, uncommonly handsome; for her pretty face was not, like Chloe's, blubbered;[2] it was smooth and elegant, and neither her features nor complexion were at all ruffled; nay, indeed, she was smiling all the time.

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[1] Miss Burney forgets. See *ante*, p. 210.

[2] "Dear Cloe, how blubber'd is that pretty face."
Prior's "Answer to Cloe Jealous."

"Look, look!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "see if the tears are not come already."

Loud and rude bursts of laughter broke from us all at once. How, indeed, could they be restrained? Yet we all stared, and looked and re-looked again and again, twenty times, ere we could believe our eyes. Sir Philip, I thought, would have died in convulsions; for his laughter and his politeness, struggling furiously with one another, made him almost black in the face. Mr. Seward looked half vexed that her crying for him was now so much lowered in its flattery, yet grinned incessantly; Miss Thrale laughed as much as contempt would allow her; but Dr. Delap seemed petrified with astonishment.

When our mirth abated, Sir Philip, colouring violently with his efforts to speak, said,

"I thank you, ma'am, I'm much obliged to you."

But I really believe he spoke without knowing what he was saying.

"What a wonderful command," said Dr. Delap, very gravely, "that lady must have over herself!"

She now took out a handkerchief, and wiped her eyes.

"Sir Philip," cried Mr. Seward, "how can you suffer her to dry her own eyes?—you, who sit next her?"

"I dare not dry them for her," answered he, "because I am not the right man."

"But if I sat next her," returned he, "she should not dry them herself."

"I wish," cried Dr. Delap, "I had a bottle to put them in; 'tis a thousand pities they should be wasted."

"There, now," said Mrs. Thrale, "she looks for all the world as if nothing had happened; for, you know, nothing *has* happened!"

"Would you cry, Miss Burney," said Sir Philip, "if we asked you?"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Thrale, "I would not do thus by Miss Burney for ten worlds! I daresay she would never speak to me again. I should think she'd be more likely to walk out of my house than to cry because I bid her."

"I don't know how that is," cried Sir Philip; "but I'm sure she's gentle enough."

"She can cry, I doubt not," said Mr. Seward, "on any proper occasion."

"But I must know," said I, "what for."

I did not say this loud enough for the S. S. to hear me; but if I had, she would not have taken it for the reflection it meant. She seemed, the whole time, totally insensible to the numerous strange and, indeed, impertinent speeches which were made, and to be very well satisfied that she was only manifesting a tenderness of disposition that increased her beauty of countenance. At least, I can put no other construction upon her conduct, which was, without exception, the strangest I ever saw. Without any pretence of affliction,—to weep merely because she was bid, though bid in a manner to forbid any one else,—to be in good spirits all the time,—to see the whole company expiring of laughter at her tears, without being at all offended,—and, at last, to dry them up, and go on with the same sort of conversation she held before they started!

What Sir Philip or Mr. Seward privately thought of this incident I know not yet: but Dr. Delap said,

"Yes, she has pretty blue eyes,—very pretty indeed; she's quite a wonderful miss. If it had not been for that little gush, I don't know what would have become of me. It was very good-natured of her, really, for she charms and uncharms in a moment; she is a bane and an antidote at the same time."

Then, after considering it more deeply,

"I declare," he said, "I was never so much surprised in my life! I should as soon have expected that the dew would fall from heaven because Mrs. Thrale called for it, as that Miss What-d'ye-call-her would have cried just because she was asked. But the thing is—did she cry? I declare I don't believe it. Yet I think, at this moment, I saw it,—only I know it could not be: something of a mist, I suppose, was before my eyes."

Sunday, June 20.—Dr. Delap stayed here till yesterday, when he returned to Lewes. He attacked me before he went, about my comedy, and said he had some claim to see it. However, I escaped showing it, though he vows he will come again, when he is able, on purpose; but I hope we shall be set out for Spa.

Mr. Thrale continues, I hope, to get better, though slowly. While I was sitting with him in the library, Mr. Seward entered. What is become of his Cornwall scheme I know not. As soon as the first inquiries were over, he spoke about what he calls our comedy, and he pressed and teased me to set about it. But he grew, in the evening, so queer, so *ennuyé*, that, in a fit of absurdity, I called him *Mr. Dry*; and the name took so with Mrs. Thrale, that I know not when he will lose it. Indeed, there is something in this young man's alternate drollery and lassitude, entertaining qualities and wearying complaints, that provoke me to more pertness than I practise to almost anybody.

The play, he said, should have the double title of "The Indifferent Man, or Everything a Bore"; and I protested *Mr. Dry* should be the hero. And then we ran on, jointly planning a succession of ridiculous scenes;—he lashing himself pretty freely, though not half so freely, or so much to the purpose, as I lashed him; for I attacked him, through the channel of *Mr. Dry*, upon his *ennui*, his causeless melancholy, his complaining languors, his yawning inattention, and his restless discontent. You may easily imagine I was in pretty high spirits to go so far: in truth, nothing else could either have prompted or excused my facetiousness: and his own manners are so cavalier, that they always, with me, stimulate a sympathising return.

He repeatedly begged me to go to work, and commit the projected scenes to paper: but I thought that might be carrying the jest too far; for as I was in no humour to spare him, written raillery might, perhaps, have been less to his taste than verbal.

He challenged me to meet him the next morning, before breakfast, in the library, that we might work together at some scenes; but I thought it as well to let the matter drop, and did not make my entry till they were all assembled.

His mind, however, ran upon nothing else; and, as soon as we happened to be left together, he again attacked me.

"Come," said he, "have you nothing ready yet? I daresay you have half an act in your pocket."

"No," quoth I, "I have quite forgot the whole business; I was only in a humour for it last night."

"How shall it begin?" cried he; "with *Mr. Dry* in his study?—his slippers just on, his hair about his ears,—exclaiming, 'What a bore is life!—What is to be done next?'"

"Next?" cried I; "what, before he has done anything at all?"

"Oh, he has dressed himself, you know.—Well, then he takes up a book——"

"For example, this," cried I, giving him Clarendon's *History*.

He took it up in character, and flinging it away, cried,

"No,—this will never do,—a history by a party writer is odious."

I then gave him Robertson's *America*.

"This," cried he, "is of all reading the most melancholy;—an account of possessions we have lost by our own folly."

I then gave him Baretti's *Spanish Travels*.[1]

"Who," cried he, flinging it aside, "can read travels by a fellow who never speaks a word of truth?"

Then I gave him a volume of *Clarissa*.

"Pho!" cried he, "a novel writ by a bookseller!—there is but one novel now one can bear to read,—and that's written by a young lady."

I hastened to stop him with Dalrymple's memoirs, and then proceeded to give him various others, upon all which he made severe, splenetic, yet comical comments;—and we continued thus employed till he was summoned to accompany Mr. Thrale to town.

The next morning, Wednesday, I had some very serious talk with Mr. Seward,—and such as gave me no inclination for raillery, though it was concerning his *ennui*; on the contrary, I resolved, at the moment, never to rally him upon that subject again, for his account of himself filled me with compassion. He told me that he had never been well for three hours in a day in his life, and that when he was thought only tired, he was really so ill that he believed scarce another man would stay in company. I was quite shocked at this account, and told him, honestly, that I had done him so little justice as to attribute all his languors to affectation.

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[1] Baretti's by no means uninteresting *Journey from London to Genoa, through England, Portugal, Spain, and France*, 1770, 4 vols.

When Mrs. Thrale joined us, he told us he had just seen Dr. Jebb,—Sir Richard, I mean,[1]—and that he had advised him to marry.

"No," cried Mrs. Thrale, "that will do nothing for you; but if you should marry, I have a wife for you."

"Who?" cried he, "the S. S.?"

"The S. S.—no?—she's the last person for you,—her extreme softness, and tenderness, and weeping, would add languor to languor, and irritate all your disorders; 'twould be drink to a dropsical man."

"No, no,—it would soothe me."

"Not a whit! it would only fatigue you. The wife for you is Lady Anne Lindsay.[2] She has birth, wit, and beauty, she has no fortune, and she'd readily accept you; and she is such a spirit that she'd animate you, I warrant you! Oh, she would trim[3] you well! You'd be all alive presently. She'd take all the care of the money affairs,—and allow you out of them eighteenpence a week! That's the wife for you!"

Mr. Seward was no means "agreeable" to the proposal; he turned the conversation upon the S. S., and gave us an account of two visits he had made her, and spoke in favour of her manner of living, temper, and character. When he had run on in this strain for some time, Mrs. Thrale cried,

"Well, so you are grown very fond of her?"

"Oh dear, no!" answered he drily, "not at all!"

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[1] See *ante*, p. 103.

[2] Lady Anne Lindsay, 1750-1825, daughter of James Lindsay, fifth Earl of Balcarres. In 1771 she had written "Auld Robin Gray." She married in 1793, becoming Lady Anne Barnard.

[3] This—in Sheridan's sense of "scold"—seems to have been a favourite word at Streatham. See *ante*, p. 127.

"Why, I began to think," said Mrs. Thrale, "you intended to supplant the parson."

"No, I don't: I don't know what sort of an old woman she'd make; the tears won't do then. Besides, I don't think her so sensible as I used to do."

"But she's very pleasing," cried I, "and very amiable."

"Yes, she's pleasing,—that's certain; but I don't think she reads much; the Greek has spoilt her."

"Well, but you can read for yourself."

"That's true; but does she work well?"

"I believe she does, and that's a better thing."

"Ay, so it is," said he saucily, "for ladies; ladies should rather write than read."

"But authors," cried I, "before they write should read."[1]

Returning again to the S. S., and being again rallied about her by Mrs. Thrale, who said she believed at last he would end there,—he said,

"Why, if I must marry—if I was bid to choose between that and racking on the wheel, I believe I should go to her."

We all laughed at this exquisite compliment; but, as he said, it *was* a compliment, for though it proved no passion for her, it proved a preference.

"However," he continued, "it won't do."

"Upon my word," exclaimed I, "you settle it all your own way!—the lady would be ready at any rate!"

"Oh yes! any man might marry Sophy Streatfield."

I quite stopped to exclaim against him.

"I mean," said he, "if he'd pay his court to her."

And now I cannot resist telling you of a dispute which Dr. Johnson had with Mrs. Thrale, the next morning, concerning me, which that sweet woman had the honesty and good sense to tell me. Dr. Johnson was talking to her and Sir Philip Jennings of the amazing progress made of late years in literature by the women. He said he was himself astonished at it, and told them he well remembered when a woman who could spell a common letter was regarded as all accomplished; but now they vied with the men in everything.[1]

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[1] See Editor's Introduction, p. 7.

"I think, sir," said my friend Sir Philip, "the young lady we have here is a very extraordinary proof of what you say."

"So extraordinary, sir," answered he, "that I know none like her,—nor do I believe there is, or there ever was, a man who could write such a book so young."

They both stared—no wonder, I am sure!—and Sir Philip said,

"What do you think of Pope, sir? could not Pope have written such a one?"

"Nay, nay," cried Mrs. Thrale, "there is no need to talk of Pope; a book may be a clever book, and an extraordinary book, and yet not want a Pope for its author. I suppose he was no older than Miss Burney when he wrote *Windsor Forest*;[2] and I suppose *Windsor Forest* is equal to *Evelina*!"

"*Windsor Forest*," repeated Dr. Johnson, "though so delightful a poem, by no means required the knowledge of life and manners, nor the accuracy of observation, nor the skill of penetration, necessary for composing such a work as *Evelina*: he who could ever write *Windsor Forest*, might as well write it young as old. Poetical abilities require not age to mature them ; but *Evelina* seems a work that should result from long experience, and deep and intimate knowledge of the world; yet it has been written without either. Miss Burney is a real wonder. What she is, she is intuitively. Dr. Burney told me she had had the fewest advantages of any of his daughters, from some peculiar circumstances. And such has been her timidity, that he himself had not any suspicion of her powers."

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[1] Compare Swift to Mrs. Pendarves, afterwards Mrs. Delany, January 29, 1736:—"A woman of quality, who had *excellent* good sense, was formerly my correspondent, but she scrawled and spelt like a Wapping wench . . . and I know *several* others of *very high quality* with the same defect."

[2] The first part of *Windsor Forest* was written in 1704; the remainder was not added until 1713, when the whole was published. In 1704 Pope was sixteen.

"Her modesty," said Mrs. Thrale (as she told me), "is really beyond bounds. It quite provokes me. And, in fact, I can never make out how the mind that could write that book could be ignorant of its value."

"That, madam, is another wonder," answered my dear, dear Dr. Johnson, "for modesty with her is neither pretence nor decorum; 'tis an ingredient of her nature; for she who could part with such a work for twenty pounds,[1] could know so little of its worth, or of her own, as to leave no possible doubt of her humility."

My kind Mrs. Thrale told me this with a pleasure that made me embrace her with gratitude; but the astonishment of Sir Philip Clerke at such an *éloge* from Dr. Johnson was quite, she says, comical.

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[1] Lowndes had apparently not yet paid the supplementary £10, which he gave her after the third edition (*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, ii. 151).

PART VI

1779

Dr. Johnson—His brilliant conversation—His preference of men of the world to scholars—The late General Phipps—Dr. Johnson teaches Miss Burney Latin—Fatal effect of using cosmetics—Mrs. Vesey and Anstey—English ladies taken by a French privateer—Letters—Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—Miss Burney's comedy, *The Witlings*—Miss Burney to her father—*The Witlings* condemned by him and Mr. Crisp—She determines not to bring it forward—Admired by Mrs. Thrale and Mr. Murphy—Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—Lamentations for her comedy—Mr. Crisp to Miss Burney—The dangers of sincerity—Littleness and vanity of Garrick—Ideas for another comedy—An eccentric family—Loss of the Grenadas—Dinner at Dr. Burney's—Mr. Crisp—Byron and D'Estaing—Diary resumed—Visit to Brighton—Mr. Chamier—A dandy of fifty years ago—A visit to Knowle Park—Description of the pictures and state apartments—Sevenoaks—Tunbridge Wells—A female oddity—The Pantiles—Mr. Wedderburn—A runaway match—Its miseries—Extraordinary child—Brighton—A character—A fascinating bookseller—Topham Beauclerk—Lady Di Beauclerk—Mrs. Musters—A mistake—Lady Pembroke—Scenes in a ball-room—How to put down impertinence—A provincial company—Dryden's *Tempest*—Cumberland—Singular anecdotes of him—His hatred of all contemporary authors—Scene with him and Mrs. Thrale in a ball-room—A singular character—Table-talk—Mystification—A solemn coxcomb—Dr. Johnson—Sir Joshua Reynolds—Price of his portraits—Artists and actors—Garrick—Fifty pounds for a song—Learned ladies—Married life—A lordly brute—Physicians and patients—Single-speech Hamilton—The humours of a newspaper—Odd names—A long story—Letter from Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—Character and objects of her Journal.

Streatham, July 5.—I have hardly had any power to write, my dear Susy, since I left you, for my cold has increased so much that I have hardly been able to do anything.

Mr. Thrale, I think, is better, and he was cheerful all the ride. Mrs. Thrale made as much of me as if the two days had been two months.

I was heartily glad to see Dr. Johnson, and I believe he was not sorry to see me: he had inquired very much after me, and very particularly of Mrs. Thrale whether she loved me as well as she used to do.

He is better in health than I have ever seen him before; his journey has been very serviceable to him,[1] and he has taken very good resolutions to reform his diet;—so has my daddy Crisp. I wish I could pit them one against the other, and see the effect of their emulation.

I wished twenty times to have transmitted to paper the conversation of the evening, for Dr. Johnson was as brilliant as I have ever known him,—and that's saying something;—but I was not very well, and could only attend to him for present entertainment.

July 10.—Since I wrote last, I have been far from well,—but I am now my own man again—*à peu-près.*

Very concise, indeed, must my journal grow, for I have now hardly a moment in my power to give it; however, I will keep up its chain, and mark, from time to time, the general course of things.

Sir Philip Jennings has spent three days here, at the close of which he took leave of us for the summer, and set out for his seat in Hampshire. We were all sorry to lose him; he is a most comfortable man in society, for he is always the same—easy, good-humoured, agreeable, and well-bred. He has made himself a favourite to the whole house, Dr. Johnson included, who almost always prefers the company of an intelligent man of the world to that of a scholar.

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[1] He had been to Lichfield and Ashbourne, returning to London about the end of June.

Lady Ladd spent the day here last Sunday. Did I ever do her the justice to give you a sketch of her since I have been more acquainted with her than when I first did her that favour? I think not.

She is gay, even to levity, wholly uncultivated as to letters, but possesses a very good natural capacity, and a fund of humour and sport that makes her company far more entertaining than that of half the best-educated women in the kingdom. The pride I have mentioned never shows itself without some provocation, and where-ever she meets with respect, she returns it with interest.

In the course of the day she said to me in a whisper, "I had a gentleman with me yesterday who is crazy to see you,—and he teased me to bring him here with me, but I told him I could not till I had paved the way."

I found, afterwards, that this gentleman is Mr. Edmund Phipps, a younger brother of Lord Mulgrave, and of the Harry Phipps Hetty danced with at Mr. Lalauze's masquerade.[1] Lady Ladd appointed the next Tuesday to bring him to dinner. As he is a particular favourite with Mrs. Thrale, her ladyship had no difficulty in gaining him admittance.

I think times have come to a fine pass, if people are to come to Streatham with no better views.

Well,—on Tuesday I was quite ill,—and

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[1] See *Early Diary*, 1889, i. pp. 64-71. Mr. Lalauze was a French dancing master in Leicester Fields. This entertainment probably suggested the masquerade chapter in Book ii. of *Cecilia*.

obliged to be blooded,—so I could not go down to dinner.

Mr. Seward accompanied Lady Ladd and Mr. E. Phipps, and added to the provocation of my confinement.

Lady Ladd and Mrs. Thrale both persuaded me to make my appearance, and as my head grew much easier, I thought it better so to do, than to increase a curiosity I was sure of disappointing, by any delay I had power to prevent.

"You will like him, I daresay," said Mrs. Thrale, "for he is very like you."

I heard afterwards that, when they returned to the parlour, Mr. Phipps, among other questions, asked, "Is she very pretty?"

N.B.—I wish there was no such question in the language.

"Very pretty?—no," said Mrs. Thrale; "but she is very like you. Do you think yourself very handsome, Mr. Phipps?"

"Pho!"—cried he,—"I was in hopes she was like her own *Evelina.*"

"No, no such thing," said Mrs. Thrale, "unless it is in timidity, but neither in beauty nor in ignorance of life."

I am very glad this passed before I came down,—for else I think I should have struck him all of a heap.

Now it's my turn to speak of him.

He is very tall—not very like me in that, you'll say—very brown[1]—not very unlike me in that, you'll say; for the rest, however, the compliment is all to me.

I saw but little of him, as they all went about an hour after I came down; but I had time to see that he is very sensible, very elegant in his manners, and very unaffected and easy.

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[1] She is said to have been rather brown of complexion. (Cp. p. 182.)

À propos to books, I have not been able to read Wraxall's *Memoirs*[1] yet—I wish Mrs. Ord had not lent them me; and now Lady Ladd, too, has brought me two volumes, called *Sketches from Nature*, written by Mr. Keate.[2] What I have read of them repaid me nothing for the time they took up,—a mere and paltry imitation of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.

July 20.—What a vile journalist do I grow!—it is, however, all I can do to keep it at all going; for, to let you a little into the nature of things, you must know my studies occupy almost every moment that I spend by myself. Dr. Johnson gives us a Latin lesson every morning. I pique myself somewhat upon being ready for him; so that really, when the copying my play,[3] and the continual returning occurrences of every fresh day are considered, you will not wonder that I should find so little opportunity for scrawling letters.

What progress we may make in this most learned scheme I know not; but, as I have always told you, I am sure I fag more for fear of disgrace than for hope of profit. To devote so much time to acquire something I shall always dread to have known, is really unpleasant enough, considering how many things there are I might employ myself in that would have no such drawback. However, on the other side, I am both pleased and flattered that Dr. Johnson should think me worth inviting to be his pupil, and I shall always recollect with pride and with pleasure the instructions he has the goodness to give me:

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[1] *Memoirs of the Kings of France of the Race of Valois*, 1777, his second book.

[2] George Keate, 1729-97. His *Sketches from Nature, taken and coloured in a Journey to Margate*, were published in 1779. They were on wood, and the text—as Miss Burney says—imitated Sterne.

[3] See *ante*, p. 215.

so, since I cannot without dishonour alter matters, 'tis as well to turn Frenchwoman, and take them in the *tant mieux* fashion.

. . . . . .

A new light is of late thrown upon the death of poor Sophy P——. Dr. Hervey, of Tooting, who attended her the day before she expired, is of opinion that she killed herself by quackery, that is, by cosmetics and preparations of lead or mercury, taken for her complexion, which, indeed, was almost unnaturally white. He thinks, therefore, that this pernicious stuff got into her veins, and poisoned her.[1] Peggy P——, nearly as white as her sister, is suspected strongly of using the same beautifying methods of destroying herself; but as Mrs. Thrale has hinted this suspicion to her, and charged her to take care of herself, we hope she will be frightened, and warned to her safety. Poor foolish girls! how dearly do they pay for the ambition of being fairer than their neighbours! I say they, for poor Peggy looks upon the point of death already.

Yesterday Mrs. Vesey came hither to tea. I'm sure if Anstey saw her he would make an exception to his assertion that "he never should see an old woman again!" for she has the most wrinkled, sallow, time-beaten face I ever saw. She is an exceeding well-bred woman, and of agreeable manners; but all her name in the world must, I think, have been acquired by her dexterity and skill in selecting parties, and by her address in rendering them easy with one another—an art, however, that seems to imply no mean understanding.

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[1] Crisp's friend, Lady Coventry (Maria Gunning), wife of the sixth Earl, 1733-60, is believed to have hastened her death in the same way. The "Sophy P——" referred to, was apparently Miss Sophia Pitches, daughter of Sir Abraham Pitches, Knt., of Streatham. Her sister Peggy, mentioned in the next sentence, oddly enough, afterwards married the seventh Earl of Coventry. See *ante*, p. 139, and also in volume vi., Mrs. Piozzi's letter to Madame D'Arblay of March 15, 1821, for further particulars as to this family.

The breaking-up of our Spa journey my father has doubtless told you. The fears and dangers of being taken by the enemy, which prevented that journey, have proved to be but too well grounded, for Mrs. Vesey informed us that the Duchess of Leinster, Lady F. Campbell, and several others, were all actually taken by a French privateer, in crossing the sea in order to proceed to Spa. We have, however, heard that they are all safe and at liberty.

Miss F. Burney to Mr. Crisp

Friday, July 30, 1779.

Now, my dear daddy, let me attempt something like an answer to your two last most kind letters.

In the first place I have the pleasure to tell you that Mr. Thrale is as well as ever he was in health, though the alarming and terrible blow he so lately received, has, I fear, given a damp to his spirits that will scarce ever be wholly conquered. Yet he grows daily rather more cheerful; but the shock was too rude and too cruel to be ever forgotten.

I am not half so well satisfied with your account of yourself as I hoped to have been; I fear you are not so steady in your intended reformation as to diet and exercise as you proposed being? Dr. Johnson has made resolutions exactly similar to yours, and in general adheres to them with strictness, but the old Adam, as you say, stands in his way, as well as in his neighbours'. I wish I could pit you against each other, for the sake of both. Yet he professes an aversion to you, because he says he is sure you are very much in his way with me! however, I believe you would neither of you retain much aversion if you had a fair meeting.

I cannot tell you how kind I take your invitations to me. I had half feared I was to be left out of the scrape now; and I am sure I should wish all my new friends at Jericho if their goodness to me procured coldness, neglect, or suspicion from my old and deep-rooted ones. I will most certainly and thankfully contrive to accept your kind offer, and, if possible, when Mrs. Gast is with you, as that would be doubling my pleasure; but you, my dear daddy, must let me know what time will be most convenient and comfortable to yourself for seeing me, and then I will manage matters as well as I can, to conform to it.

All you say of the times made me shudder; yet I was sure such would be your sentiments, for all that has happened you actually foresaw and represented to me in strong colours last spring—I mean in relation to the general decline of all trade, opulence, and prosperity.

This seems a strange, unseasonable period for my undertaking, among the rest; but yet, my dear daddy, when you have read my conversation with Mr. Sheridan, I believe you will agree that I must have been wholly insensible, nay, almost ungrateful, to resist encouragement such as he gave me—nay, more than encouragement, entreaties, all of which he warmly repeated to my father.

Now, as to the play itself, I own I had wished to have been the bearer of it when I visit Chessington; but you seem so urgent, and my father himself is so desirous to carry it you, that I have given that plan up.

Oh, my dear daddy, if your next letter were to contain your real opinion of it, how should I dread to open it! Be, however, as honest as your good nature and delicacy will allow you to be, and assure yourself I shall be very certain that all your criticisms will proceed from your earnest wishes to obviate those of others, and that you would have much more pleasure in being my panegyrist.

As to Mrs. Gast, I should be glad to know what I would refuse to a sister of yours. Make her, therefore, of your *coterie*, if she is with you while the piece is in your possession.

And now let me tell you what I wish in regard to this affair. I should like that your first reading should have nothing to do with me—that you should go quick through it, or let my father read it to you—forgetting all the time, as much as you can, that Fannikin is the writer, or even that it is a play in manuscript, and capable of alterations;—and then, when you have done, I should like to have three lines, telling me, as nearly as you can trust my candour, its general effect. After that take it to your own desk, and lash it at your leisure.

Adieu, my dear daddy! I shall hope to hear from you very soon, and pray believe me, yours ever and ever, FRANCES BURNEY.

P.S.—Let it fail never so much, the manager will have nothing to reproach me with: is not that a comfort? He would really listen to no denial.

MISS F. BURNEY TO DR. BURNEY

The fatal knell, then, is knolled, and "down among the dead men" sink the poor *Witlings*—for ever, and for ever, and for ever!

I give a sigh, whether I will or not, to their memory! for, however worthless, they were *mes enfans*, and one must do one's nature, as Mr. Crisp will tell you of the dog.

You, my dearest sir, who enjoyed, I really think, even more than myself, the astonishing success of my first attempt, would, I believe, even more than myself, be hurt at the failure of my second; and I am sure I speak from the bottom of a very honest heart, when I most solemnly declare, that upon your account any disgrace would mortify and afflict me more than upon my own; for whatever appears with your knowledge, will be naturally supposed to have met with your approbation, and, perhaps, your assistance; therefore, though all particular censure would fall where it ought—upon me—yet any general censure of the whole, and the plan, would cruelly, but certainly involve you in its severity.

Of this I have been sensible from the moment my "authorshipness" was discovered, and, therefore, from that moment I determined to have no opinion of my own in regard to what I should thenceforth part with out of my own hands. I would long since have burnt the fourth act, upon your disapprobation of it, but that I waited, and was by Mrs. Thrale so much encouraged to wait, for your finishing the piece.

You have finished it now in every sense of the word. Partial faults may be corrected; but what I most wished was, to know the general effect of the whole; and as that has so terribly failed, all petty criticisms would be needless. I shall wipe it all from my memory, and endeavour never to recollect that I ever wrote it.

You bid me open my heart to you,—and so, my dearest sir, I will, for it is the greatest happiness of my life that I dare be sincere to you. I expected many objections to be raised—a thousand errors to be pointed out—and a million of alterations to be proposed; but the suppression of the piece were words I did not expect; indeed, after the warm approbation of Mrs. Thrale, and the repeated commendations and flattery of Mr. Murphy, how could I?

I do not, therefore, pretend to wish you should think a decision, for which I was so little prepared, has given me no disturbance; for I must be a far more egregious witling than any of those I tried to draw, to imagine you could ever credit that I wrote without some remote hope of success now—though I literally did when I composed *Evelina*!

But my mortification is not at throwing away the characters, or the contrivance;—it is all at throwing away the time,—which I with difficulty stole, and which I have buried in the mere trouble of writing.

What my daddy Crisp says, "that it would be the best policy, but for pecuniary advantages, for me to write no more," is exactly what I have always thought since *Evelina* was published. But I will not now talk of putting it in practice,—for the best way I can take of showing that I have a true and just sense of the spirit of your condemnation, is not to sink sulky and dejected under it, but to exert myself to the utmost of my power in endeavours to produce something less reprehensible. And this shall be the way I will pursue as soon as my mind is more at ease about Hetty and Mrs. Thrale, and as soon as I have read myself into a forgetfulness of my old *dramatis personæ*—lest I should produce something else as witless as the last.

Adieu, my dearest, kindest, truest, best friend. I will never proceed so far again without your counsel, and then I shall not only save myself so much useless trouble, but you, who so reluctantly blame, the kind pain which I am sure must attend your disapprobation. The world will not always go well, as Mrs. Sapient might say, and I am sure

I have long thought I have had more than my share of success already.

I expect another disappointment to follow, *i.e.*—that of the Spa journey; for I believe poor Mrs. Thrale will not be able to go anywhere; but I must get in practice with a little philosophy, and then make myself amends for all evils by a conceited notion of bearing them well.

Once more, adieu, dearest sir! and never may my philosophy be put to the test of seeing any abatement of true kindness from you,—for that would never be decently endured by your own,

FRANCES BURNEY.[1]

MISS F. BURNEY TO MR. CRISP

Well! "there are plays that are to be saved, and plays that are not to be saved!"[2] so good night, Mr. Dabbler!—good-night, Lady Smatter,—Mrs. Sapient,—Mrs. Voluble,—Mrs. Wheedle,—Censor,—Cecilia,—Beaufort, and you, you great oaf, Bobby!—good-night! good-night!

And good-morning, Miss Fanny Burney!—I hope now you have opened your eyes for some time, and will not close them in so drowsy a fit again—at least till the full of the moon.

I won't tell you I have been absolutely *ravie* with delight at the fall of the curtain; but I intend to take the affair in the *tant mieux* manner, and to console myself for your censure by this greatest proof I have ever received of the sincerity, candour, and, let me add, esteem, of my dear daddy.

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[1] The following was appended to this letter, in the handwriting of Miss Burney, at a subsequent period. "The objection of Mr. Crisp to the MS. play of *The Witlings*, was its resemblance to Molière's *Femmes Sçavantes*, and consequent immense inferiority. It is, however, a curious fact, and to the author a consolatory one, that she had literally never read the *Femmes Sçavantes* when she composed *The Witlings*." [*Mrs. Barrett's note.*]

[2] A variation of Cassio's speech in *Othello*, Act II. Sc. iii.

And as I happen to love myself rather more than my play, this consolation is not a very trifling one.

As to all you say of my reputation and so forth, I perceive the kindness of your endeavours to put me in humour with myself, and prevent my taking huff, which, if I did, I should deserve to receive, upon any future trial, hollow praise from you,—and the rest from the public.

As to the MS., I am in no hurry for it. Besides, it ought not to come till I have prepared an ovation, and the honours of conquest for it.

The only bad thing in this affair, is, that I cannot take the comfort of my poor friend Dabbler,[1] by calling you a crabbed fellow, because you write with almost more kindness than ever; neither can I (though I try hard) persuade myself that you have not a grain of taste in your whole composition.

This, however, seriously I do believe, that when my two daddies put their heads together to concert for me that hissing, groaning, catcalling epistle they sent me, they felt as sorry for poor little Miss Bayes as she could possibly do for herself.

You see I do not attempt to repay your frankness with the art of pretended carelessness. But though somewhat disconcerted just now, I will promise not to let my vexation live out another day. I shall not browse upon it,—but, on the contrary, drive it out of my thoughts, by filling them up with things almost as good of other people's.

Our Hettina is much better; but pray don't keep Mr. B. beyond Wednesday, for Mrs. Thrale makes a point of my returning to Streatham on Tuesday, unless, which God forbid, poor Hetty should be worse again.

Adieu, my dear daddy, I won't be mortified, and I won't be *downed*,—but I will be proud to find I have, out of my own family, as well as in it, a friend who loves me well enough to speak plain truth to me.

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[1] A character in *The Witlings*. See above, p. 259.

Always do thus, and always you shall be tried by, your much obliged and most affectionate,

Frances Burney.

Mr. Crisp to Miss F. Burney

My dear Fannikin—I have known half a letter filled up with recapitulating the tedious and very particular reasons why and wherefore, etc. etc. etc., it was not sent before.—I don't like the example, and shall not follow it.—I will only tell you that I have been far from well. I should not say thus much, but from an anxious care lest a Fannikin should think I am supine in anything that relates either to her interest or fame. Thus much for preface.

Your other daddy (who hardly loves you better than I do) I understand has written you his sentiments on the subject of your last letter. I cannot but be of the same opinion; and have too sincere a regard for you not to declare it. This sincerity I have smarted for, and severely too, ere now;[1] and yet, happen what will (where those I love are concerned) I am determined never to part with it. All the world (if you will believe them) profess to expect it, to demand it, to take it kindly, thankfully, etc. etc.; and yet how few are generous enough to take it as it is meant!—it is imputed to envy, ill-will, a desire of lowering, and certainly to a total want of taste. Is not this, by vehement importunity, to draw your very entrails from you, and then to give them a stab?—On this topic I find I have, ere I was aware, grown warm; but I have been a sufferer.[1] My plain-dealing (after the most earnest solicitations, professions, and protestations) irrecoverably lost me Garrick. But his soul was little!—Greville,[2] for a while, became my enemy, though afterwards, through his constitutional inconstancy, he became more attached than before; and since that time, through absence, whim, and various accidents, all is (I thank Fortune) dwindled to nothing.

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[1] A reference, more or less obscure, to the partial success of Crisp's tragedy of *Virginia*, 1754.

How have I wandered! I should never have thought aloud in this manner, if I had not perfectly known the make and frame of a Fannikin's inmost soul; and by this declaration I give her the most powerful proof I am capable of, how highly I think of her generosity and understanding.

Now then, to the point—I have considered as well as I am able, what you state as Mrs. Thrale's idea—of new modelling the play; and I observe what you say, that the pursuing this project is the only chance you have of bringing out anything this year, and that with hard fagging perhaps you might do that. I agree with you, that for this year you say true; but, my dear Fanny, don't talk of hard fagging. It was not hard fagging that produced such a work as *Evelina*!—it was the ebullition of true sterling genius—you wrote it because you could not help it—it came, and so you put it down on paper. Leave fagging and labour to him

Who, high in Drury Lane,
Lull'd by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before term ends,
Compell'd by hunger and request of friends.[3]

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[1] Another reference to *Virginia*.

[2] Fulke Greville, of Wilbury House, Wilts, an early friend of Crisp and Dr. Burney. His wife, *née* Frances Macartney, was Fanny's godmother.

[3] Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, 1735, ll. 41-44.

'Tis not sitting down to a desk with pen, ink, and paper, that will command inspiration.

Having now so frankly spoke my mind on the present production, concerning which I am sorry and ashamed to differ from much wiser heads than my own, I shall acquaint you with a fancy of mine. Your daddy doctor related to me something of an account you had given him of a most ridiculous family in your present neighbourhood, which, even in the imperfect manner he described it, struck me most forcibly—the . . . He says you gave it him with so much humour, such painting, such description, such fun, that in your mouth it was a perfect comedy. He described (from you) some of the characters, and a general idea of the act. I was quite animated—there seemed to me an inexhaustible fund of matter for you to work on, and the follies of the folks of so general a nature as to furnish you with a profusion of what you want, to make out a most spirited, witty, moral, useful comedy, without descending to the invidious and cruel practice of pointing out individual characters, and holding them up to public ridicule. Nothing can be more general than the reciprocal follies of parents and children—few subjects more striking—they, if well drawn, will seize the attention, and interest the feelings of all sorts, high and low. In short, I was delighted with the idea. The proceedings of this family, as he gave them, seemed so preposterous, so productive of bad consequences, so ludicrous besides, that their whole conduct might be termed the right road to go wrong.

Your daddy doctor talks of Mrs. Thrale's coming over to this place, to fetch back him and madam. Cannot you prevail on her to drop you here for a little while? I long to have a good talk with you, as the Cherokees call it—I cannot by letter say my say—my say, look ye, Fanny, is honest—and that is something; and I think is merit enough in these evil days to incline you now and then to turn your ear my way.—I am your loving daddy, S. C.

Miss F. Burney to Mrs. Thrale[1]

Chessington, *August* 24.

Here at length we are—arrived just in time to witness poor Daddy Crisp's misery upon receiving intelligence of our late very dreadful loss.[2] Good heaven, what a terrible blow! our prophet here, who, however, is always a croaking prophet, foretells nothing but utter destruction for its inevitable consequence. You, dearest madam, who are as croaking a prophetess, what say you? must Jamaica, must all the West Indies be lost? or have you some words of comfort to give us?

Baretti met Mr. Greville[3] and Mr. Sastris[4] at our house the evening before we left town, and assured us peremptorily, and with furious vehemence, that the war would be finished in another year, and France, Spain, and America, would make what terms we pleased! Perhaps, as he found everybody else forboding ill, he thought it something for the benefit of mankind to forebode good: but you would have laughed to have seen the little respect he paid to the opposition and opinions of the great Mr. Greville, the arrogance with which he "downed" whatever he advanced, and the fury with which he answered him when contradicted in his assertions. I really expected every moment to hear him exclaim, "It is that you are an impenetrable blockhead";—and I could not get out of my head the rage with which Mr. Greville would have heard such a compliment. As it was, the astonishment that seized him when he saw the violence and contempt of Baretti, was sufficiently comical; he had never before spoken a word to him, though he had accidentally met with him, and I fancy he expected, by his tonish grandeur, to have instantly silenced and intimidated him: but when he found Baretti stout, and that the more he resisted, the more he bullied him, he could only stare, and look around at us all, with an expression that said, "Am I awake?"

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[1] This letter was placed either by Mrs. Barrett or Madame D'Arblay under 1780. It is probably more accurately inserted here.

[2] This must have been the "loss of the Grenadas" referred to by Mrs. Thrale in the letter that follows. Grenada surrendered unconditionally to D'Estaing at the beginning of July 1779.

[3] Fulke Greville. See *ante*, p. 262.

[4] Signor Sastres was an Italian master.

We had one very pleasant day last week with our dear Dr. Johnson, who dined with us, and met Mr. Barry,[1] Dr. Dunbar, and Dr. Gillies,[2] and afterwards Mr. Crofts, the famous book collector, Mr. Sastris, Mrs. Reynolds, Mr. Devaynes,[3] and Baretti, and altogether we made it out very well. But Dr. Johnson took the same dislike to poor Dr. Gillies that you did. What he can have done to you both I cannot imagine, for everybody else likes him mightily. I had a good mind to have asked Miss Reynolds to conjecture the reason of your aversion, for that would have been a happy subject for her to have pondered upon. Dr. Johnson was very sweet and very delightful indeed; I think he grows more and more so, or at least, I grow more and more fond of him. I really believe

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[1] James Barry, 1741-1806. He was at this time decorating the Great or Meeting-room of the Society of Arts with a series of historical and allegorical pictures. Into one of these, which is emblematical of "Navigation; or, the Triumph of the Thames," he whimsically introduced a likeness of Dr. Burney, in a queue and tye-wig, surrounded by water-nymphs, and personifying music (see *A Note on the Pictures*, etc. 1880, by Sir H. Trueman Wood, Secretary to the Society). Barry could never be persuaded of the impropriety of this portrait.

[2] Dr. John Gillies, 1747-1836, author of the *History of Ancient Greece*, etc., 1786. In 1793 George III. made him Historiographer-Royal for Scotland.

[3] Mr. Devaynes—"that ever-cheerful companion," Johnson calls him—was apothecary to George III. (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. 273).

Mr. Barry found him almost as amusing as a fit of the toothache!

Don't fear my opening my lips, my dear madam, about your letters; I never read but scraps and chosen morsels to anybody,—and I hope you do the same by me; for though what I have to say is not of equal consequence, my flippancies, which I rather indulge than curb to you, might do me mischief should they run about. I have not seen Piozzi: he left me your letter, which indeed is a charming one; though its contents puzzled me much whether to make me sad or merry. Who is your dwarf?—Your fan gentleman is after my own heart. I am glad you find comfort in Dr. Delap. I beg my best compliments to him,—and to my master and missey,—and believe me ever and most faithfully yours, F. B.

My father's best love to you, and my daddy's respects.

MRS. THRALE TO MISS F. BURNEY[1]

STREATHAM, *Saturday.*

MY DEAR MISS BURNEY—And so here comes your sweet letter. And so I pleased Mr. Crisp, did I? and yet he never heard, it seems, the only good things I said, which were very earnest, and very honest, and very pressing invitations to him, to see Streatham nearer than through the telescope. Now, that he did *not* hear all this was your fault, mademoiselle; for you told me that Mr. Crisp was old, and Mr. Crisp was infirm; and, if I had found those things so, I should have spoken louder, and concluded him to be deaf: but, finding him very amiable, and very elegant, and very polite to *me*, and very unlike an old man, I never thought about his being deaf; and, perhaps, was a little coquettish too, in my manner of making the invitation. I now repeat it, however, and give it under my hand, that I should consider such a visit as a very, very great honour, and so would Mr. Thrale.

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[1] This letter was placed either by Mrs. Barrett or Madame D'Arblay at the head of the letters of 1781. As it speaks of Chamier, who had died in October 1780, this is obviously incorrect. From the references to the battle of July 6, between Byron and D'Estaing, news of which reached England early in September 1779, it was probably written in that month and year, in reply to the letter from Miss Burney which preceded it.

And now for dismal!

I have been seriously ill ever since I saw you. Mrs. Burney[1] has been to me a kind and useful friend,—has suffered me to keep her here all this time—is here still—would not go to Sir Joshua's, though she was asked, because I could not; and has been as obliging, and as attentive, and as good to me as possible. Dick is happy,[2] and rides out with my master, and his mamma and I look at them out of the dressing-room window. So much for self.

In the midst of my own misery I felt for my dear Mrs. Byron's; but Chamier has relieved that anxiety by assurances that the Admiral behaved quite unexceptionably, and that, as to *honour* in the West Indies, all goes well. The Grenadas are a heavy loss indeed, nor is it supposed possible for Byron to protect Barbadoes and Antigua. Barrington[3] has acted a noble part; he and Count d'Estaing remind one of the heroic contentions of distant times. The *Lyon*, on our side, commanded by a Welshman,[4] and the *Languedoc*, on the side of the French, fought with surprising fury, and lost a great number of men; it was a glorious day, though on our side unfortunate.

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[1] Evidently Fanny's step-mother, who was staying at Streatham.

[2] Fanny's half-brother, Richard Thomas Burney.

[3] Vice-Admiral Samuel Barrington, 1729-1800, second in command at Grenada. He brought Admiral Byron's despatches to England.

[4] Captain (afterwards Sir William) Cornwallis, 1744-1819.

D'Orvilliers has left our Channel after only cutting a few ships out of Torbay, and chasing Sir Charles[1] to Spithead. Many suppose the home campaign quite over for this year.

I have had very kind letters from Dr. Delap. I love the Sussex people somehow, and they are a mighty silly race too. But 'tis never for their wisdom that one loves the wisest, or for their wit that one loves the wittiest; 'tis for benevolence, and virtue, and honest fondness, one loves people; the other qualities make one proud of loving them too.

Dear, sweet, kind Burney, adieu; whether sick or sorry, ever yours, H. L. T.

Brighthelmstone, Oct. 12.—As you say you will accept memorandums in default of journals, my dear Susy, I will scrawl down such things as most readily recur to my remembrance, and, when I get to the present time, I will endeavour to be less remiss in my accounts.

Sunday.—We had Lady Ladd at Streatham; she did not leave us till the next day. She and I are grown most prodigious friends. She is really so entertaining and lively, that it is not often possible to pass time more gaily than in her company.

Mr. Stephen Fuller, the sensible, but deaf old gentleman I have formerly mentioned,[2] dined here also; as did Mr. R——, whose trite, settled, tonish emptiness of discourse is a never-failing source of laughter and diversion.

"Well, I say, what, Miss Burney, so you had a very good party last Tuesday?—what we call the family party—in that sort of way?[3] Pray who had you?"

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[1] Sir Charles Hardy, 1716-80, Commander of the Channel Fleet.

[2] See *ante*, p. 131.

[3] This indicates that "Mr. R." is Mr. Rose Fuller. See *ante*, p. 131.

"Mr. Chamier."[1]

"Mr. Chamier, ay? Give me leave to tell you, Miss Burney, that Mr. Chamier is what we call a very sensible man!"

"Certainly. And Mr. Pepys."

"Mr. Pepys? Ay, very good—very good in that sort of way. I'm quite sorry I could not be here; but I was so much indisposed—quite what we call the nursing party."

"I'm very sorry; but I hope little Sharp[2] is well?"

"Ma'am, your most humble! you're a very good lady, indeed!—quite what we call a good lady! Little Sharp is perfectly well: that sort of attention, and things of that sort,—the bow-wow system is very well. But pray, Miss Burney, give me leave to ask, in that sort of way, had you anybody else?"

"Yes, Lady Ladd and Mr. Seward."

"So, so!—quite the family system! Give me leave to tell you, Miss Burney, this commands attention!—what we call a respectable invitation! I am sorry I could not come, indeed; for we young men, Miss Burney, we make it what we call a sort of a rule to take notice of this sort of attention. But I was extremely indisposed, indeed—what we call the walnut system had quite—— Pray what's the news, Miss Burney?—in that sort of way—is there any news?"

"None, that I have heard. Have you heard any?"

"Why, very bad!—very bad, indeed!—quite what we call poor old England! I was told, in town,—fact—fact, I assure you—that these Dons intend us an invasion this very month!—they and the Monsieurs intend us the respectable salute this very month ;—the powder system, in that sort of way! Give me leave to tell you, Miss Burney, this is what we call a disagreeable visit, in that sort of way."

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[1] Anthony Chamier, 1725-80, an original member of the Literary Club. He was, at this date, M.P. for Tamworth, F.R.S., and Under-Secretary of State for War.

[2] Mr. Rose Fuller's dog. See *ante*, p. 130.

I think, if possible, his language looks more absurd upon paper even than it sounds in conversation, from the perpetual recurrence of the same words and expressions.

On Tuesday Mr., Mrs., Miss Thrale, and "yours, ma'am, yours," set out on their expedition. The day was very pleasant, and the journey delightful; but that which chiefly rendered it so was Mr. Thrale's being apparently the better for it.

I need not tell you how sweet a county for travelling is Kent, as you know it so well. We stopped at Sevenoaks, which is a remarkably well-situated town; and here, while dinner was preparing, my kind and sweet friends took me to Knowle,[1] though they had seen it repeatedly themselves.

The park, which, it seems, is seven miles in circumference, and has, as the gamekeeper told us, 700 head of deer in it, is laid out in a most beautiful manner,—nearly, I think, equal to Hagley, as far as belongs to the disposition of the trees, hills, dales, etc., though, in regard to temples, obelisks, or any sort of buildings, it will bear no comparison to that sweet place, since nothing is there of that sort.

The house, which is very old, has the appearance of an antique chapel, or rather cathedral. Two immense gates and two courtyards precede the entrance into the dwelling part of the house; the windows are all of the small old casements; and the general air of the place is monastic and gloomy. It was begun to be built, as the housekeeper told us, in the reign of Henry II., by Thomas à Becket, but the modern part was finished in the time of Elizabeth.

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[1] Knole Park, Kent, the seat of John Frederick Sackville, third Duke of Dorset, 1745-99.

The Duke of Dorset was not there himself; but we were prevented seeing the library, and two or three other modernised rooms, because Madlle. Bacelli was not to be disturbed. The house, however, is so magnificently large, that we only coveted to see that part of it which was hung with pictures. Three state-rooms, however, were curious enough. One of them had been fitted up by an "Earle of Dorsete," for the bed-chamber of King James I. when upon a visit at Knowle: it had all the gloomy grandeur and solemn finery of that time. The second state-room a later earl had fitted up for James II. The two Charleses either never honoured Knowle with their presence, or else condescended to sleep in their father and grandfather's bed. Well, this James II.'s room was more superb than his predecessors'—flaming with velvet, tissue, tapestry, and what not. But the third state-room was magnificence itself: it was fitted up for King William. The bed-curtains, tester, quilt, and valance were all of gold flowers, worked upon a silver ground: its value, even in those days, was £7000. The table, a superb cabinet, frame of the looking-glass, and all the ornaments, and, I believe, all the furniture in the room, were of solid massive silver, curiously embossed. Nothing could be more splendid.

But to leave all this show, and come to what is a thousand times more interesting—the pictures, of which there is, indeed, a delicious collection. I could have spent a day in looking at every room, and yet have longed to see them again. I can, however, give a very imperfect and lame account of them, as we were so hurried by the housekeeper from room to room, and I was so anxious to miss nothing, that the merely glancing over so many beautiful paintings has only left a faint remembrance in my head of each particular picture, though a very strong and deep impression of the pleasure they at the time afforded me.

Among such as just now occur to me were a Lucretia with a dagger, a large whole-length, by Guido, extremely beautiful, purchased by the present duke in Italy; a Madonna and Child, small size, by Raphael, so lovely I could not turn from it till called repeatedly; a Virgin, by Carlo Dolci, that was irresistibly attractive; a Raphael, by himself, that was noble; landscapes, by Poussin, and one or two by Claude Lorraine, that were enchanting.

There are several pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and though mixed with those of the best old painters, they are so bewitching, and finished in a style of taste, colouring, and expression, so like their companions, that it is not, at first view, easy to distinguish the new from the old. The celebrated Ugolino family is almost too horrible to be looked at, yet I was glad to see it again; Two Beggar-boys make an exceedingly pleasing picture; the Duke himself, by Sir Joshua, among the portraits of his own family, in a state-room, is, I think, by no means a likeness to flatter his Grace's vanity. One room is appropriated to artists, and among them three are by Sir Joshua,—Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, and Sacchini,—all charmingly done, and the two I know extremely like.

We dined very comfortably at Sevenoaks, and thence made but one stage to Tunbridge. It was so dark when we went through the town that I could see it very indistinctly. The Wells, however, are about seven miles yet farther,—so that we saw that night nothing; but I assure you, I felt that I was entering into a new country pretty roughly, for the roads were so *sidelum* and *jumblum*, as Miss L—— called those of Teignmouth, that I expected an overturn every minute. Safely, however, we reached the Sussex Hotel, at Tunbridge Wells.

Having looked at our rooms, and arranged our affairs, we proceeded to Mount Ephraim, where Miss Streatfield resides. We found her with only her mother, and spent the evening there.

Mrs. Streatfield is very—very little, but perfectly well made, thin, genteel, and delicate. She has been quite beautiful, and has still so much of beauty left, that to call it only the remains of a fine face seems hardly doing her justice. She is very lively, and an excellent mimic, and is, I think, as much superior to her daughter in natural gifts as her daughter is to her in acquired ones: and how infinitely preferable are parts without education to education without parts!

The fair S. S. is really in higher beauty than I have ever yet seen her; and she was so caressing, so soft, so amiable, that I felt myself insensibly inclining to her with an affectionate regard. "If it was not for that little gush," as Dr. Delap said,[1] I should certainly have taken a very great fancy to her: but tears so ready—oh, they blot out my fair opinion of her! Yet whenever I am with her, I like, nay, almost love her, for her manners are exceedingly captivating; but when I quit her, I do not find that she improves by being thought over—no, nor talked over; for Mrs. Thrale, who is always disposed to half adore her in her presence, can never converse about her without exciting her own contempt by recapitulating what has passed. This, however, must always be certain, whatever may be doubtful, that she is a girl in no respect like any other.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 240.

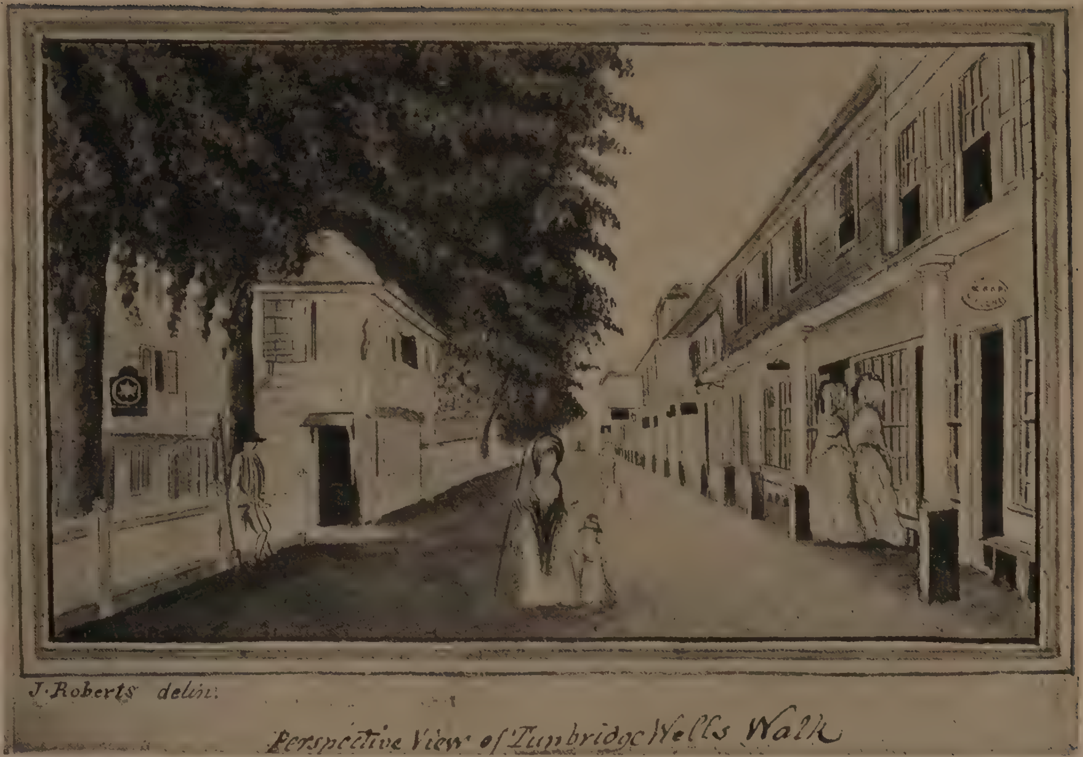
But I have not yet done with the mother: I have told you of her vivacity and her mimicry, but her character is yet not half told. She has a kind of whimsical conceit, and odd affectation, that, joined to a very singular sort of humour, makes her always seem to be rehearsing some scene in a comedy. She takes off, if she mentions them, all her own children, and, though she quite adores them, renders them ridiculous with all her power. She laughs at herself for her smallness and for her vagaries, just with the same ease and ridicule as if she were speaking of some other person; and, while perpetually hinting at being old and broken, she is continually frisking, flaunting, and playing tricks, like a young coquette.

When I was introduced to her by Mrs. Thrale, who said, "Give me leave, ma'am, to present to you a friend of your daughter's—Miss Burney," she advanced to me with a tripping pace, and, taking one of my fingers, said, "Allow me, ma'am, will you, to create a little acquaintance with you."

And, indeed, I readily entered into an alliance with her, for I found nothing at Tunbridge half so entertaining, except, indeed, Miss Birch, of whom hereafter.

The next morning the S. S. breakfasted with us; and then they walked about to show me the place.

The Sussex Hotel, where we lived, is situated at the side of the Pantiles, or public walk, so called because paved with pantiles; it is called so also, like the long room at Hampstead, because it would be difficult to distinguish it by any other name; for it has no beauty in itself, and borrows none from foreign aid, as it has only common houses at one side, and little millinery and Tunbridge-ware shops at the other, and at each


J. Roberts delin:
Perspective View of Tunbridge Wells Walk

Tunbridge Wells Walk, 1786

end is choked up by buildings that intercept all prospect. How such a place could first be made a fashionable pleasure-walk, everybody must wonder.

. . . . . .

Tunbridge Wells is a place that to me appeared very singular: the country is all rock, and every part of it is either up or down hill, scarce ten yards square being level ground in the whole place: the houses, too, are scattered about in a strange wild manner, and look as if they had been dropped where they stand by accident, for they form neither streets nor squares, but seem strewed promiscuously, except, indeed, where the shopkeepers live, who have got two or three dirty little lanes, much like dirty little lanes in other places.

Mrs. Streatfield and I increased our intimacy marvellously. She gave me the name of "*the dove*," for what reason I cannot guess, except it be that the dove has a sort of greenish grey eye,[1] something like mine; be that as it may, she called me nothing else while I stayed at Tunbridge.

In the evening we all went to the rooms. The rooms, as they are called, consisted, for this evening, of only one apartment, as there was not company enough to make more necessary, and a very plain, unadorned, and ordinary apartment that was.

There were very few people, but among them Mr. Wedderburne, the Attorney-General. You may believe I rather wished to shrink from him, if you recollect what Mrs. Thrale said of him, among the rest of the Tunbridge coterie last season, who discussed *Evelina* regularly every evening, and that he, siding with Mrs. Montagu, cut up the Branghtons, and had, as well as Mrs. Montagu, almost a quarrel with Mrs. Greville upon the subject, because she so warmly vindicated, or rather applauded, them. Lady Louisa, however, I remember he spoke of with very high praise, as Mrs. Montagu did of the Dedication; and if such folks can find anything to praise, I find myself amply recompensed for their censures, especially when they censure what I cannot regret writing, since it is the part most favoured by Dr. Johnson.

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[1] Dr. Delany, it may be remembered, found the same characteristics in his second wife. She had "what Solomon calls dove's eyes," he said.

Mr. Wedderburne joined us immediately. Mrs. Thrale presently said, "Mr. Wedderburne,[1] I must present my daughter to you,—and Miss Burney."

I curtsied mighty gravely, and shuffled to the other end of the party.

Amongst the company, I was most struck with the Hon. Mrs. W——, lately Miss T——. She ran away with a Mr. W——, a man nearly old enough to be her father, and of most notorious bad character, both as a sharper and a libertine. This wretch was with her—a most hackneyed, ill-looking object as I ever saw; and the foolish girl, who seems scarce sixteen, and looks a raw school-girl, has an air of so much discontent, and seems in a state of such dismal melancholy, that it was not possible to look at her without compassionating a folly she has so many years to live regretting. I would not wish a more striking warning to be given to other such forward, adventurous damsels, than to place before them this miserable runaway, who has not only disgraced her family, and enraged her friends, but rendered herself a repentant mourner for life.

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[1] Alexander Wedderburn, 1733-1805, afterwards Baron Loughborough, and first Earl of Rosslyn. At this date he was Attorney-General. He is supposed to have been chiefly instrumental in obtaining Johnson's pension in 1762.

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The next morning we had the company of two young ladies at breakfast—the S. S. and a Miss Birch, a little girl but ten years old, whom the S. S. invited, well foreseeing how much we should all be obliged to her.

This Miss Birch is a niece of the charming Mrs. Pleydell, and so like her that I should have taken her for her daughter, yet she is not, now, quite so handsome; but as she will soon know how to display her beauty to the utmost advantage, I fancy, in a few years, she will yet more resemble her lovely and most bewitching aunt. Everybody, she said, tells her how like she is to her aunt Pleydell.

As you, therefore, have seen that sweet woman, only imagine her ten years old, and you will see her sweet niece. Nor does the resemblance rest with the person; she sings like her, laughs like her, talks like her, caresses like her, and alternately softens and animates just like her. Her conversation is not merely like that of a woman already, but like that of a most uncommonly informed, cultivated, and sagacious woman; and at the same time that her understanding is thus wonderfully premature, she can, at pleasure, throw off all this rationality, and make herself a mere playful, giddy, romping child. One moment, with mingled gravity and sarcasm, she discusses characters, and the next, with schoolgirl spirits, she jumps round the room; then, suddenly, she asks, "Do you know such, or such a song?" and instantly, with mixed grace and buffoonery, singles out an object, and sings it; and then, before there has been time to applaud her, she runs into the middle of the room, to try some new step in a dance; and after all this, without waiting till her vagaries grow tiresome, she flings herself, with an affectionate air, upon somebody's lap, and there, composed and thoughtful, she continues quiet till she again enters into rational conversation.

Her voice is really charming—infinitely the most powerful, as well as sweet, I ever heard at her age. Were she well and constantly taught, she might, I should think, do anything,—for, two or three Italian songs, which she learnt out of only five months' teaching by Parsons,[1] she sung like a little angel, with respect to taste, feeling, and expression; but she now learns of nobody, and is so fond of French songs, for the sake, she says, of the sentiment, that I fear she will have her wonderful abilities all thrown away. Oh, how I wish my father had the charge of her!

She has spent four years out of her little life in France, which has made her distractedly fond of the French operas, "Rose et Colas," "Annette et Lubin,"[2] etc., and she told us the story quite through of several I never heard of, always singing the *sujet* when she came to the airs, and comically changing parts in the duets. She speaks French with the same fluency as English, and every now and then, addressing herself to the S. S.—"*Que je vous adore!*"—"*Ah, permettez que je me mette à vos pieds!*" etc., with a dying languor that was equally laughable and lovely.

When I found, by her taught songs, what a delightful singer she was capable of becoming, I really had not patience to hear her little French airs, and entreated her to give them up; but the little rogue instantly began pestering me with them, singing one after another with a comical sort of malice, and following me round the room, when I said I would not listen to her, to say, "But is not this pretty?—and this?—and this?" singing away with all her might and main.

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[1] Presumably William, afterwards Sir William Parsons, 1746-1817, Professor of Music and Master of the King's band.

[2] One-act versions by Charles Dibdin of these comic operas had just been produced at Covent Garden.

She sung without any accompaniment, as we had no instrument; but the S. S. says she plays too, very well. Indeed, I fancy she can do well whatever she pleases.

We hardly knew how to get away from her when the carriage was ready to take us from Tunbridge, and Mrs. Thrale was so much enchanted with her that she went on the Pantiles and bought her a very beautiful inkstand.

"I don't mean, Miss Birch," she said, when she gave it her, "to present you this toy as to a child, but merely to beg you will do me the favour to accept something that may make you now and then remember us."

She was much delighted with this present, and told me, in a whisper, that she should put a drawing of it in her journal.

So you see, Susy, other children have had this whim. But something being said of novels, the S. S. said,

"Selina, do you ever read them?"—And, with a sigh, the little girl answered,

"But too often!—I wish I did not!"

The only thing I did not like in this seducing little creature was our leave-taking. The S. S. had, as we expected, her fine eyes suffused with tears, and nothing would serve the little Selina, who admires the S. S. passionately, but that she, also, must weep—and weep, therefore, she did, and that in a manner as pretty to look at, as soft, as melting, and as little to her discomposure, as the weeping of her fair exemplar. The child's success in this pathetic art made the tears of both appear to the whole party to be lodged, as the English merchant says, "very near the eyes!"

Doubtful as it is whether we shall ever see this sweet syren again, nothing, as Mrs. Thrale said to her, can be more certain than that we shall hear of her again, let her go whither she will.

Charmed as we all were with her, we all agreed that to have the care of her would be distraction! "She seems the girl in the world," Mrs. Thrale wisely said, "to attain the highest reach of human perfection as a man's mistress!—as such she would be a second Cleopatra, and have the world at her command."

Poor thing! I hope to Heaven she will escape such sovereignty and such honours!

. . . . . .

We left Tunbridge Wells, and got, by dinner time, to our first stage, Uckfield, which afforded me nothing to record, except two lines of a curious epitaph which I picked up in the churchyard:—

A wife and eight little children had I,
And two at a birth who never did cry.

Our next stage brought us to Brighthelmstone, where I fancy we shall stay till the Parliament calls away Mr. Thrale.[1]

The morning after our arrival, our first visit was from Mr. Kipping, the apothecary, a character so curious that Foote designed him for his next piece, before he knew he had already written his last.[2] He is a prating, good-humoured, old gossip, who runs on in as incoherent and unconnected a style of discourse as Rose Fuller, though not so tonish.

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[1] He was member for Southwark.

[2] Foote died in 1777. He had spent his last summer at Brighton. There was a Kipping, a surgeon, at 28 West Street in 1800; and it was a Dr. Kipping who, in 1775, had attended "Single-Speech" Hamilton, when he had a serious horse accident on Brighton Downs.

The rest of the morning we spent, as usual at this place, upon the Steyn, and in booksellers' shops. Mrs. Thrale entered all our names at Thomas's,[1] the fashionable bookseller; but we find he has now a rival, situated also upon the Steyn, who seems to carry away all the custom and all the company. This is a Mr. Bowen, who is just come from London, and who seems just the man to carry the world before him as a shopkeeper. Extremely civil, attentive to watch opportunities of obliging, and assiduous to make use of them—skilful in discovering the taste or turn of mind of his customers, and adroit in putting in their way just such temptations as they are least able to withstand. Mrs. Thrale, at the same time that she sees his management and contrivance, so much admires his sagacity and dexterity, that, though open-eyed, she is as easily wrought upon to part with her money, as any of the many dupes in this place, whom he persuades to require indispensably whatever he shows them.

He did not, however, then at all suspect who I was, for he showed me nothing but schemes for raffles, and books, pocket-cases, etc., which were put up for those purposes. It is plain I can have no authoress air, since so discerning a bookseller thought me a fine lady spendthrift, who only wanted occasions to get rid of money.

In the evening we went to the rooms, which, at this time, are open every other night at Shergold's, or the New Assembly Rooms, and the alternate nights at Hick's, or the Ship Tavern.[1] This night they were at the latter.

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[1] R. Thomas's "Circulating Library" was on the east side of the Steine. He had succeeded in 1774 to E. Baker, who had opened the first library in Brighton in 1760. Mr. Bowen—Mrs. Thrale's *protégé*—was the successor of the Miss Widgett mentioned at p. 226. He was a person of courtly manners, and a serious source of anxiety to Thomas. "There was a sort of rivalry," says Bishop, "between Mr. Thomas and Mr. Bowen . . . as to whose subscription-book should most justly deserve the title of the 'Book of Numbers'—'names,' rather than character or position in society, being regarded as of primary importance" (*Brighton in the Olden Time*, 1892, pp. 112, 113, 118).

There was very little company, and nobody that any of us knew, except two or three gentlemen of Mr. Thrale's acquaintance, among whom was that celebrated wit and libertine, the Hon. Mr. Beauclerk,[2] and a Mr. Newnham, a rich counsellor, learned in the law, but, to me, a displeasing man.

Almost everybody but ourselves went to cards; we found it, therefore, pretty stupid, and I was very glad when we came home.

. . . . . .

Sunday morning, as we came out of church, we saw Mrs. Cumberland,[3] one of her sons, and both her daughters. Mrs. Thrale spoke to them, but I believe they did not recollect me. They are reckoned the flashers of the place, yet everybody laughs at them for their airs, affectations, and tonish graces and impertinences.

In the evening, Mrs. Dickens,[4] a lady of Mrs. Thrale's acquaintance, invited us to drink tea at the rooms with her, which we did, and found them much more full and lively than the preceding night.

Mrs. Dickens is, in Mrs. Thrale's phrase, a sensible, hard-headed woman, and her daughter, Miss Dickens, who accompanied us, is a pretty girl of fifteen, who is always laughing, not, however from folly, as she deserves the same epithet I have given her mother, but from youthful good-humour, and from having from nature, as Mr. Thrale comically said to her, after examining her some minutes, "a good merry face of her own."

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[1] "Shergold's" was the Castle Inn, in Castle Square, pulled down in 1823; "Hicks's," the Old Ship Tavern in Ship Street. Both had Public Rooms, where Dress Balls and Card Assemblies were held throughout the Season.

[2] The Hon. Topham Beauclerk, 1730-80, Johnson's friend, and grandson of the first Duke of St. Albans. He was an original member of the Literary Club. He died not long after the mention of him here (March 11, 1780).

[3] The wife of Cumberland the dramatist. The daughters were no doubt the two elder girls,—Elizabeth, afterwards Lady Bentinck, and Sophia, afterwards Mrs. Badcock.

[4] Mrs. Dickens was probably the wife of the grandson of Mrs. Thrale's friend, Richard Scrase.

The folks of most consequence with respect to rank, who were at the rooms this night, were Lady Pembroke,[1] and Lady Di Beauclerk,[2] both of whom have still very pleasing remains of the beauty for which they have been so much admired. But the present beauty, whose remains our children (*i.e.* nieces) may talk of, is a Mrs. Musters, an exceeding pretty woman, who is the reigning toast of the season.[3]

While Mrs. Thrale, Mrs. Dickens, and I were walking about after tea, we were joined by a Mr. Cure, a gentleman of the former's acquaintance. After a little while he said,

"Miss Thrale is very much grown since she was here last year; and besides, I think she's vastly altered."

"Do you, sir," cried she, "I can't say I think so."

"Oh, vastly!—but young ladies at that age are always altering. To tell you the truth, I did not know her at all."

This, for a little while, passed quietly; but soon after, he exclaimed,

"Ma'am, do you know I have not yet read *Evelina*?"

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[1] Lady Pembroke, *d.* 1831, was the second daughter of Charles Spencer, second Duke of Marlborough, and sister of Lady Di Beauclerk. She was the wife of Henry, tenth Earl of Pembroke, 1734-94.

[2] Lady Diana Beauclerk, 1734-1808, was the eldest daughter of the second Duke of Marlborough. Her first husband was Viscount Bolingbroke, from whom she was divorced. She was a clever amateur artist, who illustrated Dryden's *Fables* and Walpole's *Mysterious Mother*. A memoir of her by Mrs. Steuart Erskine was published in 1903.

[3] Mother of the J. Musters, who married Byron's first love, Mary Chaworth. Mrs. Barrett repeats "an anecdote of this lady, related by a gentleman still (1842) living at Brighton. He remembers meeting Mrs. Musters at the ball mentioned by Miss Burney, and being requested to give her a glass of water, it was turbid and chalky; upon which she said, as she drank it, 'Chalk is thought to be a cure for the heart-burn:—I wonder whether it will cure the heart-ache?'"

"Have not you so, sir?" cried she, laughing.

"No, and I think I never shall, for there's no getting it; the booksellers say they never can keep it a moment, and the folks that hire it keep lending it from one to another in such a manner that it is never returned to the library. It's very provoking."

"But," said Mrs. Thrale, "what makes you exclaim about it so to me?"

"Why, because, if you recollect, the last thing you said to me when we parted last year, was—'Be sure you read *Evelina*.' So as soon as I saw you I recollected it all again. But I wish Miss Thrale would turn more this way."

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Cure? do you know Miss Thrale now?"

"Yes, to be sure," answered he, looking full at me, "though I protest I should not have guessed at her had I seen her with anybody but you."

"Oh, ho!" cried Mrs. Thrale, laughing, "so you mean Miss Burney all this time."

"What?—how?—eh?—why is that—is not that Miss Thrale? is not that your daughter?"

"No to be sure it is not—I wish she was!"

Mr. Cure looked aghast, Mrs. Dickens laughed aloud, and I, the whole time, had been obliged to turn my head another way, that my sniggering might not sooner make him see his mistake.

As soon, I suppose, as he was able, Mr. Cure in a low voice repeated, "Miss Burney! so then that lady is the authoress of *Evelina* all this time."

And, rather abruptly, he left us and joined another party.

I suppose he told his story to as many as he talked to, for, in a short time, I found myself so violently stared at that I could hardly look any way without being put quite out of countenance,—particularly by young Mr. Cumberland, a handsome, soft-looking youth, who fixed his eyes upon me incessantly, though but the evening before, when I saw him at Hick's,[1] he looked as if it would have been a diminution of his dignity to have regarded me twice.

This ridiculous circumstance will, however, prevent any more mistakes of the same kind, I believe, as my "authorshipness" seems now pretty well known and spread about Brighthelmstone. [The very next morning as Miss Thrale and I entered Bowen's shop, where we were appointed to meet Mrs. Thrale, I heard her saying to him, as they were both in serious and deep confabulation: "So you have picked up all this, Mr. Bowen, have you?" then, seeing me, "Oh, ho!" she cried, "so one never is to speak of anybody at Brighthelmstone, but they are to be at one's elbow."

"I presume," quoth I, "you were scarcely speaking of me?"

"No, but I was hearing of you from Mr. Bowen."

And when we left the shop she told me that he had said to her, "Oh, ma'am, what a book thrown away was that! All the trade cry shame on Lowndes. Not, ma'am, that I expected he could have known its worth, because that's out of the question; but when its profits told him what it was, it's quite scandalous that he should have done nothing! quite ungentlemanlike indeed!"

There's a bookseller for you, Susy!]

And now, if by the mention of a ball, I have raised in you any expectations of adventures, which with Charlotte, at least, I doubt not has been the case,—I am sorry to be obliged to blast them all by confessing that none at all happened.

One thing, however, proved quite disagreeable to me, and that was the whole behaviour of the whole tribe of the Cumberlands, which I must explain.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 282.

Mr. Cumberland, when he saw Mrs. Thrale, flew with eagerness to her and made her take his seat, and he talked to her, with great friendliness and intimacy, as he has been always accustomed to do,—and inquired very particularly concerning her daughter, expressing an earnest desire to see her. But when, some time after, Mrs. Thrale said, "Oh, there is my daughter, with Miss Burney," he changed the discourse abruptly,—never came near Miss Thrale, and neither then nor since, when he has met Mrs. Thrale, has again mentioned her name: and the whole evening he seemed determined to avoid us both.

Mrs. Cumberland contented herself with only looking at me as at a person she had no reason or business to know.

The two daughters, but especially the eldest, as well as the son, were by no means so quiet; they stared at me every time I came near them as if I had been a thing for a show; surveyed me from head to foot, and then again, and again, and again returned to my face, with so determined and so unabating a curiosity, that it really made me uncomfortable.

All the folks here impute the whole of this conduct to its having transpired that I am to bring out a play this season; for Mr. Cumberland, though in all other respects an agreeable and a good man, is so notorious for hating and envying and spiting all authors in the dramatic line, that he is hardly decent in his behaviour towards them.

He has little reason, at present at least, to bear me any ill-will; but if he is capable of such weakness and malignity as to have taken an aversion to me merely because I can make use of pen and ink, he deserves not to hear of my having suppressed my play, or of anything else that can gratify so illiberal a disposition.

Dr. Johnson, Mr. Cholmondeley, and Mr. and Mrs. Thrale have all repeatedly said to me, "Cumberland no doubt hates you heartily by this time"; but it always appeared to me a speech of mingled fun and flattery, and I never dreamed of its being possible to be true. However, perhaps yet all this may be accidental, so I will discuss the point no longer.

. . . . . .

A few days since we drank tea at Mrs. Dickens's, where, with other company, we met Sir John and Lady S——.[1] Sir John prides himself in being a courtier of the last age. He is abominably ugly, and a prodigious puffer,—now of his fortune, now of his family, and now of his courtly connections and feats. His lady is a beautiful woman, tall, genteel, and elegant in her person, with regular features, and a fine complexion. For the rest, she is well-bred, gentle, and amiable.

She invited us all to tea at her house the next evening, where we met Lady Pembroke, whose character, as far as it appears, seems exactly the same as Lady S——'s. But the chief employment of the evening was listening to Sir John's bragadocios of what the old king said to him,—which of the ladies of quality were his cousins,—how many acres of land he enjoyed in Sussex,—and other such modest discourse.

After tea, we all went to the rooms, Lady Pembroke having first retired. There was a great deal of company, and among them the Cumberlands. The eldest of the girls, who was walking with Mrs. Musters, quite turned round her whole person every time we passed each other, to keep me in sight, and stare at me as long as possible; so did her brother. I never saw anything so ill-bred and impertinent; I protest I was ready to quit the rooms to avoid them; till at last Miss Thrale, catching Miss Cumberland's eye, gave her so full, determined, and *downing* a stare, that whether cured by shame or by resentment, she forbore from that time to look at either of us. Miss Thrale, with a sort of good-natured dryness, said, "Whenever you are disturbed with any of these starers, apply to me,—I'll warrant I'll cure them. I daresay the girl hates me for it; but what shall I be the worse for that? I would have served master Dickey so too, only I could not catch his eye."

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[1] Shelley. Sir John Shelley, *d.* 1783, Keeper of the Records in the Tower and Clerk of the Pipe. His second wife was Elizabeth Woodcock, to whom he was married in 1775.

Oct. 20. — Last Tuesday, at the request of Lady S——, who patronised a poor actor, we all went to the play,—which was Dryden's *Tempest*,[1]—and a worse performance have I seldom seen. Shakspeare's *Tempest*, which for fancy, invention, and originality, is at the head of beautiful improbabilities, is rendered by the additions of Dryden a childish chaos of absurdity and obscenity; and the grossness and awkwardness of these poor unskilful actors rendered all that ought to have been obscure so shockingly glaring, that there was no attending to them without disgust. All that afforded me any entertainment was looking at Mr. Thrale, who turned up his nose with an expression of contempt at the beginning of the performance, and never suffered it to return to its usual place till it was ended!

The play was ordered by Mrs. Cumberland. These poor actors never have any company in the boxes unless they can prevail upon some lady to

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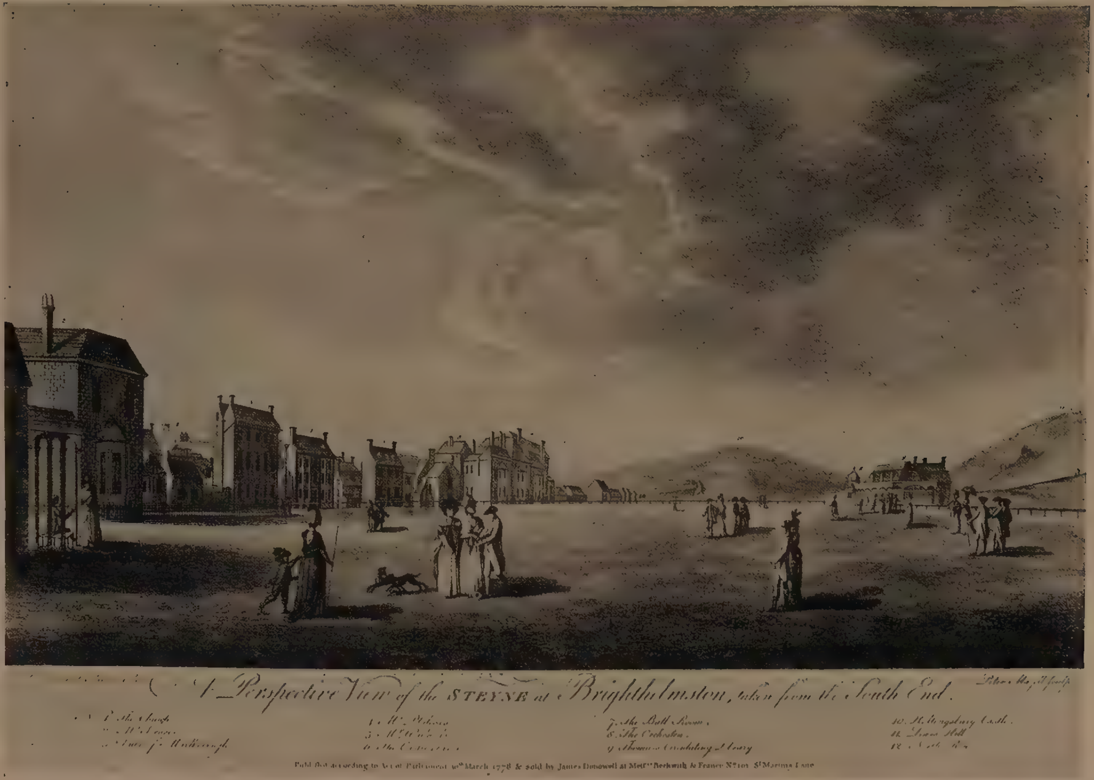
[1] *The Tempest; or, the Enchanted Island*, 1670. The Brighton theatre of this date was in North Street.


A Perspective View of the STEYNE at Brighthelmston, taken from the South End.
7. The Ball Room.
8. The Orchestra.
Publish'd according to Act of Parliament 10th March 1778 & sold by James Donowell at Mess.rs Beckwith & Francer No. 101 St. Martins Lane

A VIEW OF THE STEINE AT BRIGHTON, 1778

bespeak a play, and desire her acquaintance to go to it. But we all agreed we should not have been very proud to have had our names at the head of a play-bill of Dryden's *Tempest*.

By the way, Mrs. Cumberland has never once waited on Mrs. Thrale since our arrival, though, till now, she always seemed proud enough of the acquaintance. Very strange! Mr. Cumberland, after a week's consideration and delay, called at last, and chatted with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale very sociably and agreeably. I happened to be upstairs, and felt no great desire, you may believe, to go down, and Mrs. Thrale archly enough said afterwards,

"I would have sent to you, but hang it, thought I, if I only name her, this man will snatch his hat and make off!"

The other morning the two Misses came into Thomas's shop while we were there, and the eldest, as usual, gave me, it seems, the honour of employing her eyes the whole time she stayed.

We afterwards met them on the Steyn, and they curtsied to Mrs. Thrale, who stopt and inquired after their father, and then a dawdling conversation took place.

"How were you entertained at the play, ma'am?—did you ever see anything so full?"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Thrale, "the ladies are all dying of it! such holding up of fans!"

"Oh, because it was so hot," cried Miss Cumberland, entirely misunderstanding her: "it was monstrous hot, indeed!"

The next time I meet them, I intend to try if I can stop this their staring system, by courtesying to them immediately. I think it will be impossible, if I claim them as acquaintance, that they can thus rudely fasten their eyes upon me.

We have had a visit from Dr. Delap. He told me that he had another tragedy, and that I should have it to read.

He was very curious to see Mr. Cumberland, who, it seems, has given evident marks of displeasure at his name whenever Mrs. Thrale has mentioned it. That poor man is so wonderfully narrow-minded in his authorship capacity, though otherwise good, humane, and generous, that he changes countenance at either seeing or hearing of any writer whatsoever. Mrs. Thrale, with whom, this foible excepted, he is a great favourite, is so enraged with him for his littleness of soul in this respect, that merely to plague him, she vowed at the rooms she would walk all the evening between Dr. Delap and me. I wished so little to increase his unpleasant feelings, that I determined to keep with Miss Thrale and Miss Dickens entirely. One time, though, Mrs. Thrale, when she was sitting by Dr. Delap, called me suddenly to her, and when I was seated, said, "Now let's see if Mr. Cumberland will come and speak to me!" But he always turns resolutely another way when he sees her with either of us; though at all other times he is particularly fond of her company.

"It would actually serve him right," says she, "to make Dr. Delap and you strut at each side of me, one with a dagger, and the other with a mask, as tragedy and comedy."

"I think, Miss Burney," said the doctor, "you and I seem to stand in the same predicament. What shall we do for the poor man? suppose we burn a play apiece?"

"Depend upon it," said Mrs. Thrale, "he has heard, in town, that you are both to bring one out this season, and perhaps one of his own may be deferred on that account."

"Well, he's a fine man," cried the doctor;

"pray, Miss Burney, show me him when you see him."

. . . . . .

On the announcement of the carriage, we went into the next room for our cloaks, where Mrs. Thrale and Mr. Cumberland were in deep conversation.

"Oh, here's Miss Burney!" said Mrs. Thrale aloud. Mr. Cumberland turned round, but withdrew his eyes instantly; and I, determined not to interrupt them, made Miss Thrale walk away with me. In about ten minutes she left him, and we all came home.

As soon as we were in the carriage,

"It has been," said Mrs. Thrale warmly, "all I could do not to affront Mr. Cumberland to-night!"

"Oh, I hope not!" cried I; "I would not have you for the world!"

"Why, I have refrained; but with great difficulty!"

And then she told me the conversation she had just had with him. As soon as I made off, he said, with a spiteful tone of voice,

"Oh, that young lady is an author, I hear!"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Thrale, "author of *Evelina*!"

"Humph,—I am told it has some humour!"

"Ay, indeed! Johnson says nothing like it has appeared for years!"

"So," cried he, biting his lips, and waving uneasily in his chair, "so, so!"

"Yes," continued she, "and Sir Joshua Reynolds told Mr. Thrale he would give fifty pounds to know the author!"

"So, so—oh, vastly well!" cried he, putting his hand on his forehead.

"Nay," added she, "Burke himself sat up all night to finish it!"

This seemed quite too much for him; he put both his hands to his face, and waving backwards and forwards, said,

"Oh, vastly well!—this will do for anything!" with a tone as much as to say, Pray, no more! Then Mrs. Thrale bid him good-night, longing, she said, to call Miss Thrale first, and say, "So you won't speak to my daughter?—why, she is no author!"

I much rejoice that she did not, and I have most earnestly entreated her not to tell this anecdote to anybody here, for I really am much concerned to have ever encountered this sore man, who, if already he thus burns with envy at the success of my book, will, should he find his narrowness of mind resented by me, or related by my friends, not only wish me ill, but do me every ill office hereafter in his power. Indeed, I am quite shocked to find how he avoids and determines to dislike me; for hitherto I have always been willing and able to hope that I had not one real enemy or ill-wisher in the world. I shall still, however, hope, if I can but keep Mrs. Thrale's indignant warmth of friendship within bounds, to somewhat conciliate matters, and prevent any open enmity, which authorises all ill deeds, from taking place. All authorship contention I shudder to think of.

. . . . . .

I must now have the honour to present to you a new acquaintance, who this day dined here—Mr. B——y, an Irish gentleman, late a commissary in Germany. He is between sixty and seventy, but means to pass for about thirty; gallant, complaisant, obsequious, and humble to the fair sex, for whom he has an awful reverence; but when not immediately addressing them, swaggering, blustering, puffing, and domineering. These are his two apparent characters; but the real man is worthy, moral, religious, though conceited and parading.

He is as fond of quotations as my poor "*Lady Smatter*,"[1] and, like her, knows little beyond a song, and always blunders about the author of that. His language greatly resembles Rose Fuller's, who, as Mrs. Thrale well says, when as old, will be much such another personage. His whole conversation consists in little French phrases, picked up during his residence abroad, and in anecdotes and story-telling, which are sure to be retold daily and daily in the same words.

Having given you this general sketch, I will endeavour to illustrate it by some specimens; but you must excuse their being unconnected, and only such as I can readily recollect.

Speaking of the ball in the evening, to which we were all going, "Ah, madam!" said he to Mrs. Thrale, "there was a time when—tol-de-rol, tol-de-rol [rising, and dancing, and singing], tol-de-rol! —I could dance with the best of them; but, now a man, forty and upwards, as my Lord Ligonier[2] used to say—but—tol-de-rol!—there was a time!"

"Ay, so there was, Mr. B——y," said Mrs. Thrale, "and I think you and I together made a very venerable appearance!"

"Ah! madam, I remember once, at Bath, I was called out to dance with one of the finest young ladies I ever saw. I was just preparing to do my best, when a gentleman of my acquaintance was so cruel as to whisper me, 'B——y! the eyes of all Europe are upon you!'—for that was the phrase of the times. 'B——y!' says he, 'the eyes of all Europe are upon you!'—I vow, ma'am, enough to make a man tremble!—tol-de-rol, tol-de-rol!

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[1] A character in *The Witlings*, regarded by Mrs. Thrale as meant for herself.

[2] John, Earl Ligonier, 1678-1770. Reynolds painted him.

[dancing]—the eyes of all Europe are upon you! —I declare, ma'am, enough to put a man out of countenance!"

Dr. Delap, who came here some time after, was speaking of Horace.

"Ah! madam," cried Mr. B——y, "this Latin—things of that kind—we waste our youth, ma'am, in these vain studies. For my part I wish I had spent mine in studying French and Spanish—more useful, ma'am. But, bless me, ma'am, what time have I had for that kind of thing? Travelling here, over the ocean, hills and dales, ma'am—reading the great book of the world—poor ignorant mortals, ma'am,—no time to do anything!"

"Ay, Mr. B——y," said Mrs. Thrale, "I remember how you downed Beauclerk and Hamilton, the wits, once at our house, when they talked of ghosts!"

"Ah! ma'am, give me a brace of pistols, and I warrant I'll manage a ghost for you! Not but Providence may please to send little spirits—guardian angels, ma'am—to watch us: that I can't speak about. It would be presumptuous, ma'am—for what can a poor, ignorant mortal know?"

"Ay, so you told Beauclerk and Hamilton."

"Oh yes, ma'am. Poor human beings can't account for anything—and call themselves *esprits forts*. I vow 'tis presumptuous, ma'am! *Esprits forts*, indeed! they can see no farther than their noses, poor, ignorant mortals! Here's an admiral, and here's a prince, and here's a general, and here's a dipper—and poor Smoker, the bather, ma'am! What's all this strutting about, and that kind of thing? and then they can't account for a blade of grass!"

After this, Dr. Johnson being mentioned,

"Ay," said he, "I'm sorry he did not come down with you. I liked him better than those others: not much of a fine gentleman, indeed, but a clever fellow—a deal of knowledge—got a deuced good understanding!"

Dr. Delap rather abruptly asked my christian name: Mrs. Thrale answered, and Mr. B——y tenderly repeated,

"Fanny! a prodigious pretty name, and a pretty lady that bears it. Fanny! Ah! how beautiful is that song of Swift's—

"When Fanny, blooming fair,[1]
First caught my ravished sight,
Struck with her mien and air—"

"Her face and air," interrupted Mrs. Thrale, "for 'mien and air' we hold to be much the same thing."

"Right, ma'am, right! You, ma'am—why, ma'am—you know everything; but, as to me—to be sure, I began with studying the old Greek and Latin, ma'am: but, then, travelling, ma'am!—going through Germany, and then France, and Spain, ma'am! and dipping at Brighthelmstone, over hills and dales, reading the great book of the world! Ay, a little poetry now and then, to be sure, I have picked up.

"My Phœbe and I,
O'er hills, and o'er dales, and o'er valleys will fly,
And love shall be by!

But, as you say, ma'am!—

"Struck with her face and air,
I felt a strange delight!

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[1] Lady Fanny Shirley, *d.* 1778, daughter of the Countess Dowager of Ferrers. Walpole mentions her in the *Twickenham Register*, 1759:—

Where Fanny, "ever-blooming fair,"
Ejaculates the graceful pray'r,
And, 'scap'd from sense, with nonsense smit,
For Whitefield's cant leaves Stanhope's wit.

How pretty that is: how progressive from the first sight of her! Ah! Swift was a fine man!"

"Why, sir, I don't think it's printed in his works!" said Dr. Delap.

"No!" said Mrs. Thrale, "because 'tis Chesterfield's!"[1]

"Ay, right, right, ma'am! so it is."

Now, if I had heard all this before I wrote my play, would you not have thought I had borrowed the hint of my *Witlings* from Mr. B——y?

"I am glad, Mr. Thrale," continued this hero, "you have got your fireplace altered. Why, ma'am, there used to be such a wind, there was no sitting here. Admirable dinners — excellent company—*très bon* fare—and, all the time, 'Signor Vento' coming down the chimney! Do you remember, Miss Thrale, how, one day at dinner, you burst out a-laughing, because I said a *très bon* goose?"

But if I have not now given you some idea of Mr. B——y's conversation, I never can, for I have written almost as many words as he ever uses, and given you almost as many ideas as he ever starts! And as he almost lives here, it is fitting I let you know something of him.

Well, in the evening we all went to the ball, where we had appointed to meet Lady S——, Mrs. Dickens, and Mr., Mrs., and the Misses S——, of Lewes.

The eldest Miss S—— had for a partner a most odiously vulgar young man, short, thick, and totally underbred.

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[1] This is not so sure. It was more probably by the dramatist Thomas Philips, to whom it is assigned in the *Daily Post* in 1733, and in the account of Philips's death in the same paper for March 12, 1738-39. Nevertheless Chesterfield allowed it to be included in vol. i. of Dodsley's *Collection* with certain pieces written by him. There is a touching reference to Lady Fanny in Walpole's letter to Mann of July 16, 1778:—"'Fanny, blooming fair,' died here yesterday of a stroke of palsy. She had lost her memory for some years, and remembered nothing but her beauty and not her Methodism. Being confined with only servants, she was continually lamenting, 'I to be abandoned that all the world used to adore.' She was seventy-two."

"I wonder," said she to me, between one of the dances, "what my partner's name is—do you know?"

"I am not sure," quoth I, "but I fancy Mr. Squab!"

"Mr. Squab!" repeated she. "Well, I don't like him at all. Pray, do you know who that gentleman is that jumps so?" pointing to Mr. Cure.

"Yes," answered I, "'tis a Mr. Kill!"

"Well," cried she, "I don't like his dancing at all. I wonder who that officer is?" pointing to a fat, coarse sort of a man, who stooped immoderately.

"Captain Slouch," quoth I.

"Well," said she, "I think the people here have very odd names!"

And thus, though the names I gave them were merely and markingly descriptive of their persons, did this little noodle and her sister instantly believe them.

When the dancing was over, and we walked about, Mr. Cure, with his usual obsequiousness, came to speak to me, and for awhile joined us; and these girls, who penned me between them, tittered, and pinched me, and whispered observations upon "Mr. Kill," till I was obliged to assume the most steady gravity, to prevent his discovering how free I had made with him.

Just before we came away, Mr. S—— came up to his daughter, and said, "Pray, my dear, who was the gentleman you danced with?"

"Mr. Squab, papa," answered she.

"A good, tight young man," said Mr. S——. "I must go and make a bow to him before we go."

All the Cumberlands were there. Mr. Cumberland avoids Miss Thrale as much as he does me, merely, I suppose, because she is commonly with me. However, if such is his humour, he was not made too happy this night, for Mrs. Thrale told me, that while she was seated next him, as he was playing at cards, Dr. Delap came to her, and began singing my *éloge*, and saying how I should be adored in France; that that was the paradise of lady wits, and that, for his part, if he had not known I was Dr. Burney's daughter, he thought I had so much a French face and look[1] that he should have guessed me for a daughter of Voltaire's,—and other such speeches, all of which, I fear, were so many torments to poor Mr. Cumberland.

"But," said Mrs. Thrale, "let him be tormented, if such things can torment him. For my part I'd have a starling taught to halloo *Evelina*!"[2]

. . . . . .

I am absolutely almost ill with laughing. This Mr. B——y half convulses me; yet I cannot make you laugh by writing his speeches, because it is the manner which accompanies them, that, more than the matter, renders them so peculiarly ridiculous. His extreme pomposity, the solemn stiffness of his person, the conceited twinkling of his little old eyes, and the quaint importance of his delivery, are so much more like some pragmatical old coxcomb represented on the stage, than like anything in real and common life, that I think, were I a man, I should sometimes be betrayed into clapping him for acting so well. As it is, I am sure no character in any comedy I ever saw has made me laugh more extravagantly.

He dines and spends the evening here constantly, to my great satisfaction.

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[1] Miss Burney—like the Miss Berrys—is said to have been French-looking. She was, of course, of French extraction on the mother's side.

[2] Cf. 1 *Henry IV*. Act I. Sc. iii.

At dinner, when Mrs. Thrale offers him a seat next her, he regularly says,

"But where are *les charmantes?*" meaning Miss T. and me. "I can do nothing till they are accommodated!"

And, whenever he drinks a glass of wine, he never fails to touch either Mrs. Thrale's, or my glass, with "*est-il permis?*"

But at the same time that he is so courteous, he is proud to a most sublime excess, and thinks every person to whom he speaks honoured beyond measure by his notice, nay, he does not even look at anybody without evidently displaying that such notice is more the effect of his benign condescension, than of any pretension on their part to deserve such a mark of his perceiving their existence. But you will think me mad about this man.

. . . . . .

By far the best among our men acquaintance here, and him whom, next to Mr. Selwyn, I like the best, is a Mr. Tidy. You will probably suspect, as Lady Hesketh did last night when she met him here, that this is a nickname only, whereas he hath not, heaven knows, a better in the world! He appears a grave, reserved, quiet man; but he is a sarcastic, observing, and ridiculing man. No trusting to appearances, no, not even to wigs! for a meaner, more sneaking and pitiful wig,—a wig that less bespeaks a man worth twopence in his pocket, or two ideas in his head, did I never see than that of Mr. Tidy.

But the most agreeable part of the evening was the time I spent with Mr. Selwyn, to whom I have taken a prodigious fancy,[1] and a very odd one you will say if you inquire the "peticklers," for it is neither for brilliancy, talents, wit, person, nor youth, since he is possessed of none of these; but the fact is, he appears to me uncommonly good, full of humanity, generosity, delicacy, and benevolence.

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[1] Mr. Selwyn was a wealthy and elderly banker (of Paris), who admired Miss Burney in return. But Mrs. Thrale thought him too old for a husband to her friend.

[One time, while Mrs. and Miss Thrale and I were parading up and down, he came to us laughing, and said,

"A gentleman has this moment been asking Lord Sefton who is the lady in the hat (*N.B.*, I only had one)? 'What!' answered his lordship, 'did you never read—— ?'"

He stopped and bit his lips, and I bit mine, and whisked to the other side.

I wonder if ever I shall cease feeling awkward at the first attack of every fresh attacker upon this subject?]

. . . . . .

Do you know I have been writing to Dr. Johnson! I tremble to mention it; but he sent a message in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, to wonder why his pupils did not write to him, and to hope they did not forget him: Miss Thrale, therefore, wrote a letter immediately, and I added only this little postscript:

"*P.S.*—Dr. Johnson's other pupil a little longs to add a few lines to this letter,—but knows too well that all she has to say might be comprised in signing herself his obliged and most obedient servant, F. B.: so that's better than a long rigmarole about nothing."

Nov. 3.—Last Monday we went again to the ball. Mr. B——y, who was there, and seated himself next to Lady Pembroke, at the top of the room, looked most sublimely happy!—He continues still to afford me the highest diversion. Rose Fuller was never half so entertaining; and

Mr. Selwyn, who has long known him, and has all his stories and sayings by heart, studies to recollect all his favourite topics, and tells me beforehand what he will say upon the subject he prepares me for leading him to. Indeed, between him and Mrs. Thrale, almost all he has to say is almost exhausted.

As he is notorious for his contempt of all artists, whom he looks upon with little more respect than upon day-labourers, the other day, when painting was discussed, he spoke of Sir Joshua Reynolds as if he had been upon a level with a carpenter or farrier.

"Did you ever," said Mrs. Thrale, "see his 'Nativity'?"

"No, madam,—but I know his pictures very well; I knew him many years ago, in Minorca;[1] he drew my picture there,—and then he knew how to take a moderate price; but now, I vow, ma'am, 'tis scandalous—scandalous indeed! to pay a fellow here seventy guineas for scratching out a head!"

"Sir," cried Dr. Delap, "you must not run down Sir Joshua Reynolds, because he is Miss Burney's friend."

"Sir," answered he, "I don't want to run the man down; I like him well enough in his proper place; he is as decent as any man of that sort I ever knew; but for all that, sir, his prices are shameful. Why, he would not [looking at the poor doctor with an enraged contempt] he would not do *your* head under seventy guineas!"

"Well," said Mrs. Thrale, "he had one portrait[2] at the last exhibition, that I think hardly could be paid enough for; it was of a Mr. Stuart; I had never done admiring it."

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[1] Reynolds was at Port Mahon, Minorca, in 1749 as the guest of the Governor, General Blakeney.

[2] This must have been the portrait exhibited in this year of Andrew Stuart (*d.* 1801), the Scotch agent for the opponents of the filiation of the Douglas in the famous Douglas cause, and the author of the *Letters to Lord Mansfield* on that cause, 1773.

"What stuff is this, ma'am!" cried Mr. B——y, "how can two or three dabs of paint ever be worth such a sum as that?"

"Sir," said Mr. Selwyn (always willing to draw him out), "you know not how much he is improved since you knew him in Minorca; he is now the finest painter, perhaps, in the world."

"Pho, pho, sir," cried he, "how can you talk so? you, Mr. Selwyn, who have seen so many capital pictures abroad?"

"Come, come, sir," said the ever odd Dr. Delap, "you must not go on so undervaluing him, for, I tell you, he is a friend of Miss Burney's."

"Sir," said Mr. B——y, "I tell you again I have no objection to the man; I have dined in his company two or three times; a very decent man he is, fit to keep company with gentlemen; but, ma'am, what are all your modern dabblers put together to one ancient? nothing!—a set of—not a Rubens among them! I vow, ma'am, not a Rubens among them!"

But, perhaps, his contempt of Dr. Delap's plea that he was my friend, may make you suppose that I am not in his good graces; whereas I assure you it is not so; for the other evening, when they were all at cards, I left the room for some time, and, on my return, Mr. Selwyn said,

"Miss Burney, do not your cheeks tingle?"

"No," quoth I, "why should they?"

"From the conversation that has just passed," answered he; and afterwards I heard from Mrs. Thrale, that Mr. B——y had been singing my praises, and pronouncing me "a dear little *charmante*."

Brighthelmstone.—To go on with the subject I left off with last—my favourite subject you will think it—Mr. B——y. I must inform you that his commendation was more astonishing to me than anybody's could be, as I had really taken it for granted he had hardly noticed my existence. But he has also spoken very well of Dr. Delap—that is to say, in a very condescending manner. "That Dr. Delap," said he, "seems a good sort of man; I wish all the cloth were like him; but, lackaday! 'tis no such thing; the clergy in general are but odd dogs."

Whenever plays are mentioned, we have also a regular speech about them.

"I never," he says, "go to a tragedy,—it's too affecting; tragedy enough in real life: tragedies are only fit for fair females; for my part, I cannot bear to see Othello tearing about in that violent manner;—and fair little Desdemona—ma'am, 'tis too affecting! to see your kings and your princes tearing their pretty locks,—oh, there's no standing it! 'A straw-crown'd monarch,'—what is that, Mrs. Thrale?

> "A straw-crown'd monarch in mock majesty.

I can't recollect now where that is; but for my part I really cannot bear to see such sights. And then out come the white handkerchiefs, and all their pretty eyes are wiping, and then come poison and daggers, and all that kind of thing,—Oh ma'am, 'tis too much; but yet the fair tender hearts, the pretty little females, all like it!"

This speech, word for word, I have already heard from him literally four times.

When Mr. Garrick was mentioned, he honoured him with much the same style of compliment as he had done Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"Ay, ay," said he, "that Garrick was another of those fellows that people run mad about. Ma'am, 'tis a shame to think of such things! an actor living like a person of quality! scandalous! I vow, scandalous!"

"Well,—commend me to Mr. B——y!" cried Mrs. Thrale, "for he is your only man to put down all the people that everybody else sets up."

"Why, ma'am," answered he, "I like all these people very well in their proper places; but to see such a set of poor beings living like persons of quality,—'tis preposterous! common sense, madam, common sense is against that kind of thing. As to Garrick, he was a very good mimic, an entertaining fellow enough, and all that kind of thing; but for an actor to live like a person of quality—oh, scandalous!"

Some time after, the musical tribe was mentioned. He was at cards at the time with Mr. Selwyn, Dr. Delap, and Mr. Thrale, while we "fair females," as he always calls us, were speaking of Agujari. He constrained himself from flying out as long as he was able; but upon our mentioning her having fifty pounds a song, he suddenly, in a great rage, called out "Catgut and rosin!—ma'am, 'tis scandalous!"[1]

We all laughed, and Mr. Selwyn, to provoke him on, said,

"Why, sir, how shall we part with our money better?"

"Oh, fie! fie!" cried he, "I have not patience to hear of such folly; common sense, sir, common sense is against it. Why now, there was one of these fellows at Bath last season, a Mr. Rauzzini,[2]

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[1] Agujari (see *ante*, p. 156), whom Lord Macaulay severely styles the "rapacious" Agujari, received fifty pounds a song for singing at the Oxford Street Pantheon, which, it is admitted, she always filled.

[2] Venanzio Rauzzini, 1747-1810, singer, teacher, and composer. He settled at Bath (13 Gay Street) about 1780, becoming, for the rest of his life, its great musical dictator (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 122 *et seq.*).

—I vow I longed to cane him every day! such a work made with him! all the fair females sighing for him! enough to make a man sick!"

. . . . . .

I have always, at dinner, the good fortune to sit next the General, for I am sure if I had not I could not avoid offending him, because I am eternally upon the titter when he speaks, so that if I faced him he must see my merriment was not merely at his humour, but excited by his countenance, his language, his winking, and the very tone of his voice.

Mr. Selwyn, who, as I have already hinted, indulges my enjoyment of Mr. B——y's conversation by always trying to draw him out upon such topics as he most shows off in, told me, some days since, that he feared I had now exhausted all his stories, and heard him discuss all his shining subjects of discourse; but afterwards, recollecting himself, he added, that there was yet one in reserve, which was "ladies learning Greek," upon which he had, last year, flourished very copiously. The occasion was Miss Streatfield's knowledge of that language, and the General, who wants two or three phrases of Latin to make him pass for a man of learning (as he fails not daily to repeat his whole stock), was so much incensed that a "fair female" should presume to study Greek, that he used to be quite outrageous upon the subject. Mr. Selwyn, therefore, promised to treat me with hearing his dissertation, which he assured me would afford me no little diversion.

. . . . . .

The other day, at dinner, the subject was married life, and, among various husbands and wives, Lord L—— being mentioned, Mr. B——y pronounced his panegyric, and called him his friend.

Mr. Selwyn, though with much gentleness, differed from him in opinion, and declared he could not think well of him, as he knew his lady, who was an amiable woman, was used very ill by him.

"How, sir?" cried Mr. B——y.

"I have known him," answered Mr. Selwyn, "frequently pinch her till she has been ready to cry with pain, though she has endeavoured to prevent its being observed."

"And I," said Mrs. Thrale, "know that he pulled her nose, in his frantic brutality, till he broke some of the vessels of it; and when she was dying she still found the torture he had given her by it so great, that it was one of her last complaints."

The General, who is all for love and gallantry, far from attempting to vindicate his friend, quite swelled with indignation at this account, and, after a pause, big with anger, exclaimed,

"Wretched doings, sir, wretched doings!"

"Nay, I have known him," added Mr. Selwyn, "insist upon handing her to her carriage, and then, with an affected kindness, pretend to kiss her hand, instead of which he has almost bit a piece out of it!"

"Pitiful!—pitiful! sir," cried the General, "I know nothing more shabby!"

"He was equally inhuman to his daughter," said Mrs. Thrale, "for, in one of his rages, he almost throttled her."

"Wretched doings!" again exclaimed Mr. B——y, "what! cruel to a fair female! Oh fie! fie! fie!—a fellow who can be cruel to females and children, or animals, must be a pitiful fellow indeed. I wish we had had him here in the sea. I should like to have had him stripped, and that kind of thing, and been well banged by ten of our dippers here with a cat-o'-nine-tails. Cruel to a fair female! Oh fie! fie! fie!"

I know not how this may read, but I assure you its sound was ludicrous enough.

However, I have never yet told you his most favourite story, though we have regularly heard it three or four times a day!—And this is about his health.

"Some years ago," he says,—"let's see, how many? in the year '71,—ay, '71, '72—thereabouts—I was taken very ill, and, by ill-luck, I was persuaded to ask advice of one of these Dr. Gallipots:—oh, how I hate them all! Sir, they are the vilest pick-pockets—know nothing, sir! nothing in the world! poor ignorant mortals! and then they pretend—In short, sir, I hate them all; I have suffered so much by them, sir—lost four years of the happiness of my life—let's see, '71, '72, '73, '74—ay, four years, sir!—mistook my case, sir!—and all that kind of thing. Why, sir, my feet swelled as big as two horses' heads! I vow I will never consult one of these Dr. Gallipot fellows again! lost, me, sir, four years of the happiness of my life!—why I grew quite an object!—you would hardly have known me!—lost all the calves of my legs!—had not an ounce of flesh left!—and as to the rouge[1]—why, my face was the colour of that candle!—those —— Gallipot fellows!—why they robbed me of four years—let me see, ay, '71, '72——"

And then it all goes over again!

This story is always *à propos*; if health is mentioned, it is instanced to show its precariousness; if life, to bewail what he has lost of it; if pain, to relate what he has suffered; if pleasure, to recapitulate what he has been deprived of; but if a physician is hinted at, eagerly, indeed, is the opportunity seized of inveighing against the whole faculty.

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[1] Hers manifestly, the complexion.

. . . . . .

Tuesday was a very agreeable day indeed, and I am sure a merry one to me; but it was all owing to the General, and I do not think you seem to have a true taste for him, so I shall give you but a brief account of my entertainment from him.

We had a large party of gentlemen to dinner. Among them was Mr. Hamilton, commonly called Single-speech Hamilton,[1] from having made one remarkable speech in the House of Commons against government, and receiving some douceur to be silent ever after. This Mr. Hamilton is extremely tall and handsome; has an air of haughty and fashionable superiority; is intelligent, dry, sarcastic, and clever. I should have received much pleasure from his conversational powers, had I not previously been prejudiced against him, by hearing that he is infinitely artful, double, and crafty.

The dinner conversation was too general to be well remembered; neither, indeed, shall I attempt more than partial scraps relating to matters of what passed when we adjourned to tea.

Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Selwyn, Mr. Tidy, and Mr. Thrale seated themselves to whist; the rest looked on: but the General, as he always does, took up the newspaper, and, with various comments, made aloud, as he went on reading to himself, diverted the whole company. Now he would cry, "Strange! strange that!"—presently, "What stuff! I don't believe a word of it!"—a little after, "Oh, Mr. Bate,[2] I wish your ears were cropped!"—then,

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[1] William Gerard Hamilton, 1729-96, at this date M.P. for Wilton, and Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer. His famous maiden speech was delivered in 1755 when he was member for Petersfield. He had a house on the west side of the Steine, occupied after his death by Lord Mansfield's sister, Lady Anne Murray.

[2] Henry Bate, afterwards Sir Henry Bate Dudley, 1745-1824, editor of the *Morning Post*, and known popularly as the "Fighting Parson."

"Ha! ha! ha! *funnibus*! *funnibus*! indeed!"—and, at last, in a great rage, he exclaimed, "What a fellow is this, to presume to arraign the conduct of persons of quality!"

Having diverted himself and us in this manner, till he had read every column methodically through, he began all over again, and presently called out, "Ha! ha! here's a pretty thing!" and then, in a plaintive voice, languished out some wretched verses.

Although the only mark of approbation with which the company favoured these lines was laughing at them, the General presently found something else equally bad, which he also praised, also read, and also raised a laugh at.

A few minutes after he began puffing and blowing, with rising indignation, and, at last, cried out, "What a fellow is this? I should not be at all surprised if General Burgoyne cut off both his ears!"

"You have great variety there," cried Mr. Hamilton drily; "but I think, Mr. B——y, you have read us nothing to-day about the analeptic pills!"

Though we all smiled at this, the General, unconscious of any joke, gravely answered,

"No, sir! I have not seen them yet, but I daresay I shall find them by and by!"

And, by the time the next game was finished, he called out, "No! I see nothing of the analeptic pills to-day; but here's some Samaritan drops!"

Soon after he began to rage about some baronet, whose title began, Sir Carnaby. "Well," he cried, "what names people do think of! Here's another now, Sir Onesiphoras Paul! why, now, what a name is that! Poor human beings here, inventing such a name as that! I can't imagine where they met with it: it is not in the Bible."

"There you are a little mistaken!" said Mr. Hamilton coolly.

"Is it? Well, I protest, Onesiphoras! ha! ha!"

"But you don't exactly pronounce it right," returned Mr. Hamilton, "it is Onesiphor*us*—not *as*, as you say it."

Mr. B——y made no answer, but went on reading the newspaper to himself.

Mr. Hamilton, who had now given his place at the whist-table to Mr. Bateson, related to us a very extraordinary cure performed by a physician, who would not write his prescriptions, "Because," said he, "they should not appear against him, as his advice was out of rule; but the cure was performed, and I much honour, and would willingly employ such a man."

"How!" exclaimed Mr. B——y, who always fires at the very name of a physician, "what! let one of those fellows try his experiments upon you? For my part, I'll never employ one again as long as I live! I've suffered too much by them; lost me five years of the happiness of my life—ever since the year—let's see, '71, '72——"

"Mrs. Thrale," interrupted Mr. Hamilton, "I was in some hopes Dr. Johnson would have come hither with you."

Mrs. Thrale answered him; but Mr. B——y went on.

"One of those Dr. Gallipots, now—Heberden[1] attended a poor fellow I knew. 'Oh,' says he, 'he'll do vastly well!' and so on, and so on, and all that kind of thing: but the next morning, when he called, the poor gentleman was dead! There's your Mr. Heberden for you! Oh, fie! fie!"

"What will you do without them?" said Mr. Hamilton.

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[1] William Heberden, M.D., 1710-1801, one of Johnson's medical advisers.

"Do, sir? Why, live like men! Who wants a pack of their nostrums? I'll never employ one again while I live! They mistook my case, sir; they played the very devil with me! Let me see, '71, '72——"

"What!" interrupted Mr. Hamilton, "are you seventy-two?"

The dry humour with which he asked this, set the whole company in a roar. Mr. B——y angrily answered,

"No, sir, no! no such thing; but I say——"

And then he went on with his story: no calves to his legs; mistook his case; feet swelled as big as horses' heads; not an ounce of flesh;—and all the old phrases were repeated with so sad a solemnity, and attended to by Mr. Hamilton with so contemptuous a frigidity, that I was obliged to take up a newspaper to hide my face. Miss Thrale ran out of the room; Mr. Selwyn laughed till he could hardly hold his cards; Captain W—— hallooed quite indecently; and Mr. Tidy shook all over as if he was in an ague: and yet the General never found it out.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MR. CRISP

ST. MARTIN'S STREET, *Dec.* 1779.

MY DEAREST DADDY—I have deferred writing from day to day, in expectation of being able to fix some time for my long and most earnestly coveted visit to dear Chessington; but my father's own movements have been so uncertain, that I found it impossible to tease him about fixing mine. At length, however, we have come to the point. He has desired me to sift for what room you have, and to sound as to convenience. Now I know the shortest way of doing this is by coming plump upon the question; and, therefore, both to save myself the trouble of a long half-meaning, half-hinting, half-intelligible rigmarole, and you the trouble of vague suspicions, and puzzling conjectures, I think the best method is plainly to say, that, in about ten days, he thinks he can come to Chessington, if, without difficulty, you can then accommodate him.

Not one word has he yet said about the rest of the family; but I know he means not to travel *solus*: and I know, too, that it is not any secret to him that I, for one, build upon accompanying him, as a thing of course.

I am extremely gratified by your approbation of my journal. Miss Birch, I do assure you, exists exactly such as I have described her. I never mix truth and fiction: all that I relate in journalising is strictly, nay plainly, fact. I never, in all my life, have been a sayer of the thing that is not; and now I should be not only a knave but a fool also, in so doing, as I have other purposes for imaginary characters than filling letters with them. Give me credit, therefore, on the score of interest, and common sense, if not of principle. But, however, the world, and especially the Great world, is so filled with absurdity of various sorts, now bursting forth in impertinence, now in pomposity, now giggling in silliness, and now yawning in dulness, that there is no occasion for invention to draw what is striking in every possible species of the ridiculous.[1]

I hope to be very comfortable with you, when I can get to you. I will bring you the little sketch I made of the heroine you seem to interest yourself in,[2] and perhaps by your advice may again take her up, or finally let her rest.

Adieu, dearest daddy; kindest love to you from all quarters,—mostly from F. B.

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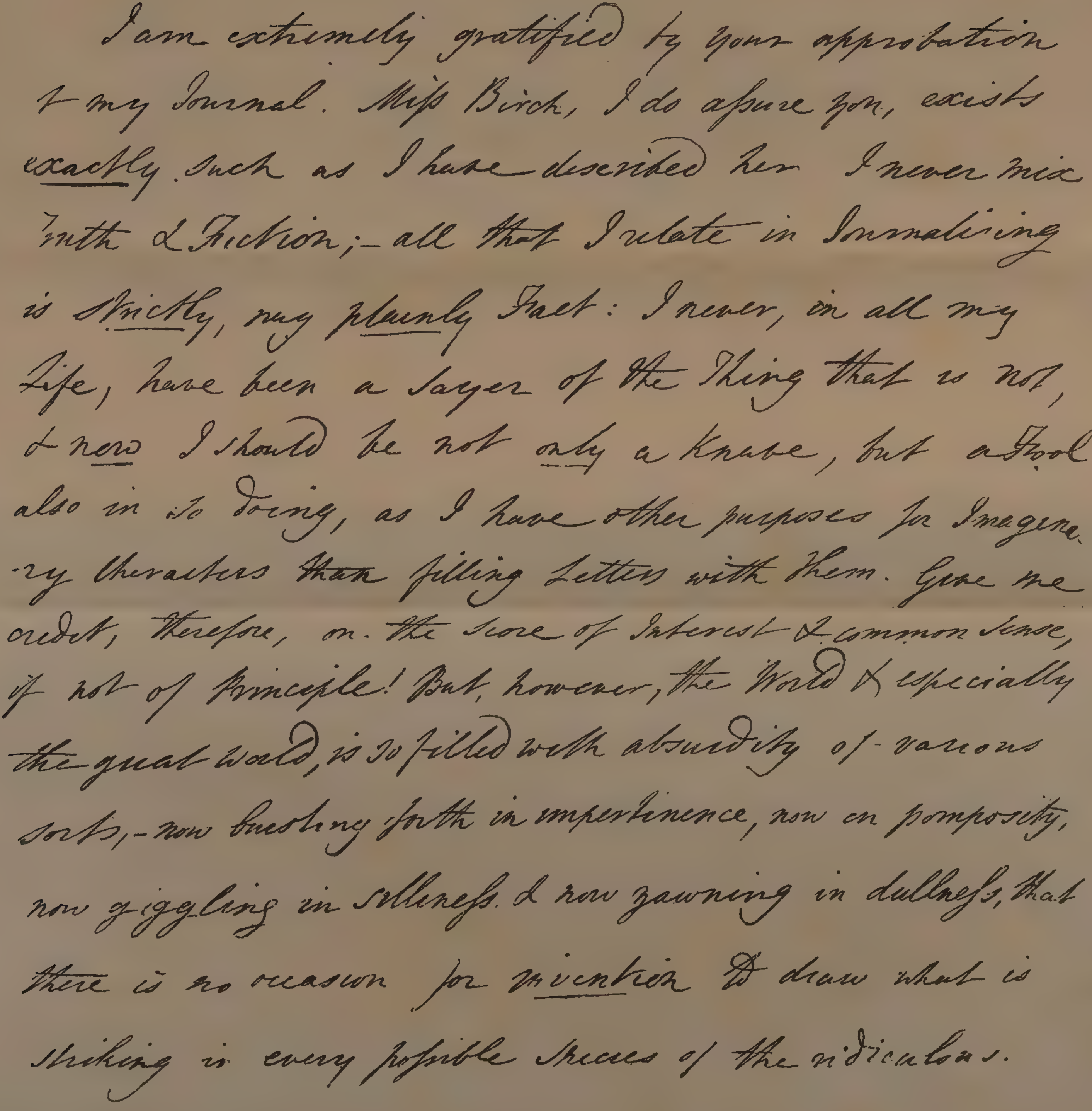
[1] See *facsimile* at p. 312.

[2] Perhaps the forthcoming *Cecilia*.

EXTRACT IN FACSIMILE

OF A LETTER FROM MISS BURNEY TO MR. CRISP, WRITTEN IN 1779



I am extremely gratified by your approbation of my Journal. Miſs Birch, I do aſsure you, exists *exactly* such as I have described her. I never mix Truth & Fiction;—all that I relate in Journalising is *strictly*, nay *plainly* Fact: I never, in all my Life, have been a Sayer of the Thing that is not, & *now* I should be not *only* a Knave, but a Fool also in so doing, as I have other purposes for Imaginary Characters than filling Letters with them. Give me credit, therefore, on the Score of Interest & common Sense, if not of Principle! But, however, the World & especially the great world, is so filled with absurdity of various sorts,—now bursting forth in impertinence, now in pomposity, now giggling in sillineſs, & now yawning in dullneſs, that there is no occasion for *invention* to draw what is striking in every poſsible species of the ridiculous.

PART VII

1780

Miss Burney to Mr. Crisp—The troubles of popularity—Ladies' dress—Miss Burney's comedy of *The Witlings*—Sheridan's application to her—Plot and characters of *The Witlings*—Lord Sandwich—Captain Cook—His death—Hon. Capt. Walsingham—George III. and the navy—Dr. Hunter—Dr. Solander—Murphy—His oddities—Table-talk—Mr. Crisp to Miss Burney—Excellent advice about her comedy—Colley Cibber—Journal resumed—Pacchierotti—Journey to Bath—The Lawrence family at Devizes—The late President of the Royal Academy at ten years of age—Mr. W. Hoare—Arrival at Bath—Description of the place and company—Parties—Lady Miller's vase—Mrs. Montagu—The theatre—The Bowdler family—Dr. Woodward—Dr. Harrington—Mrs. Byron—Lord Mulgrave—The Hon. Augustus Phipps—Table-talk—Anecdotes of the late General Phipps—Illustrations of *Evelina*—Dr. Johnson—The Provost of Eton—Bath Society—Dean of Ossory—Mrs. Montagu—A Witling—Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Thrale contrasted—Letter from Mr. Crisp—The Duchess of Marlborough—A Scotch bishop—Duchess of Portland—Colley Cibber—Sheridan—Bath—Journal resumed—Lord Mulgrave—The Bowdler family—The Byrons—A pleasant meeting—A mistake—An evening party—A pretty poet—Mrs. Siddons as "Belvidera"—A pink and white poet—Anstey, author of the *New Bath Guide.*

FROM MISS F. BURNEY TO MR. CRISP

ST. MARTIN'S STREET, *January* 22, 1780.

MY DEAREST DADDY—As this sheet is but to contain a sequel of what I writ last, not to aspire at being regarded as a separate or answer-claiming letter, I shall proceed without fresh preamble.

You make a *comique* kind of inquiry about my "incessant and uncommon engagements." Now, my dear daddy, this is an inquiry I feel rather small in answering, for I am sure you expect to hear something respectable in that sort of way, whereas I have nothing to enumerate that commands attention, or that will make a favourable report. For the truth is, my "uncommon" engagements have only been of the *visiting system*, and my "incessant" ones only of the *working party*; — for perpetual dress requires perpetual replenishment, and that replenishment actually occupies almost every moment I spend out of company.[1]

"Fact! fact!" I assure you,—however paltry, ridiculous, or inconceivable it may sound. Caps, hats, and ribbons make, indeed, no venerable appearance upon paper;—no more do eating and drinking;—yet the one can no more be worn without being made, than the other can be swallowed without being cooked; and those who can neither pay milliners nor keep scullions, must either toil for themselves, or go capless and dinnerless. So, if you are for a high-polished comparison, I'm your man!

Now, instead of furbelows and gewgaws of this sort, my dear daddy probably expected to hear of duodecimos, octavos, or quartos!—*Hélas*! I am sorry that is not the case,—but not one word, no, not one syllable did I write to any purpose, from the time you left me at Streatham, till Christmas, when I came home. But now I have something to communicate concerning which I must beg you to give me your opinion.

As my play was settled in its silent suppression,

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[1] Costume was always a trouble to Miss Burney. Mr. R. O. Cambridge of Twickenham affirmed that "Miss B. had no time to write, for she was always working at her clothes."

I entreated my father to call on Mr. Sheridan, in order to prevent his expecting anything from me, as he had had a good right to do, from my having sent him a positive message that I should, in compliance with his exhortations at Mrs. Cholmondeley's, try my fortune in the theatrical line, and send him a piece for this winter. My father did call, but found him not at home, neither did he happen to see him till about Christmas. He then acquainted him that what I had written had entirely dissatisfied me, and that I desired to decline for the present all attempts of that sort.

Mr. Sheridan was pleased to express great concern,—nay more, to protest he would not accept my refusal. He begged my father to tell me that he could take no denial to seeing what I had done—that I could be no fair judge for myself—that he doubted not but it would please, but was glad I was not satisfied, as he had much rather see pieces before their authors were contented with them than afterwards, on account of sundry small changes always necessary to be made by the managers, for theatrical purposes, and to which they were loth to submit when their writings were finished to their own approbation. In short, he said so much, that my father, ever easy to be worked upon, began to waver, and told me he wished I would show the play to Sheridan at once.

This very much disconcerted me: I had taken a sort of disgust to it, and was myself most earnestly desirous to let it die a quiet death. I therefore cooled the affair as much as I conveniently could, and by evading from time to time the conversation, it was again sinking into its old state,—when again Mr. Sheridan saw my father, and asked his leave to call upon me himself.

This could not be refused.

Well,—I was now violently fidgeted, and began to think of alterations,—and by setting my head to work, I have actually now written the fourth act from beginning to end, except one scene.—Mr. Sheridan, however, has not yet called, and I have so little heart in the affair, that I have now again quite dropped it.

Such is the present situation of my politics. Now, I wish you much to write me your private opinion what I had best do in case of an emergency. Your letters are always sacred, so pray write with your usual sincerity and openness. I know you too well to fear your being offended if things should be so managed that your counsel cannot be followed; it will, at any rate, not be thrown away, since it will be a fresh proof of your interest in my affairs and my little self.

My notions I will also tell you; they are (in case I must produce this piece to the manager):—

To entirely omit all mention of the club;—

To curtail the parts of Smatter and Dabbler as much as possible;—

To restore to Censor his £5000 and not trouble him even to offer it;—

To give a new friend to Cecilia,[1] by whom her affairs shall be retrieved, and through whose means the catastrophe shall be brought to be happy;—

And to change the nature of Beaufort's connections with Lady Smatter, in order to obviate the unlucky resemblance the adopted nephew bears to our female pride of literature.[2]

This is all I have at present thought of. And yet, if I am so allowed, even these thoughts shall all turn to nothing; for I have so much more fear than hope, and anxiety than pleasure, in thinking at all of the theatre, that I believe my wisest way will be to shirk—which, if by evasive and sneaking means I can, I shall.

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[1] This shows there was a character in *The Witlings* who foreshadowed the heroine of Miss Burney's second book.

[2] Mrs. Montagu had adopted her nephew.

Now concerning Admiral Jem;—you have had all the accounts of him from my mother; whether or not he has made any change in his situation we cannot tell. The *Morning Post* had yesterday this paragraph:—

"We hear Lieutenant Burney has succeeded to the command of Capt. Clerke's ship."

That this, as Miss Waldron said of her hair, is all a falsity,[1] we are, however, certain, as Lord Sandwich has informed my father that the first lieutenant of poor Capt. Cook was promoted to the *Discovery*. Whether, however, Jem has been made first lieutenant of the *Resolution*, or whether that vacancy has been filled up by the second lieutenant of that ship, we are not informed. The letter from my admiral has not, it seems, been very clear, for I met the Hon. Capt. Walsingham last week on a visit, and he said he had been at court in the morning. "And the king," he continued, "said to me, 'Why, I don't think you captains in the navy shine much in the literary way!' 'No, sir,' answered I, 'but then, in return, no more do your Majesty's captains in the army'—except Burgoyne,[2] I had a good mind to say!—but I did not dare."

I shall give you some further particulars of my meeting this Capt. Walsingham in some future letter, as I was much pleased with him.

I am sure you must have been grieved for poor Capt. Cook.[3] How hard, after so many dangers, so much toil,—to die in so shocking a manner—in an island he had himself discovered—among savages he had himself, in his first visit to them, civilised and rendered kind and hospitable, and in pursuit of obtaining justice in a cause in which he had himself no interest, but zeal for his other captain! He was, besides, the most moderate, humane, and gentle circumnavigator who ever went out upon discoveries; agreed the best with all the Indians, and, till this fatal time, never failed, however hostile they met, to leave them his friends.

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[1] Upon Cook's death, James Burney was transferred to the *Discovery* as first lieutenant.

[2] General John Burgoyne, 1723-92, of the Saratoga disaster, wrote several plays, *The Maid of the Oaks*, 1774, *The Lord of the Manor*, 1781, *The Heiress*, 1786, and *Richard Cœur de Lion*, 1786.

[3] Cook was killed by the natives of Owhyhee, February 14, 1779. The news had just reached England.

Dr. Hunter,[1] who called here lately, said that he doubted not but Capt. Cook had trusted them too unguardedly; for as he always had declared his opinion that savages never committed murder without provocation, he boldly went among them without precautions for safety, and paid for his incautious intrepidity with his very valuable life.

The Thrales are all tolerably well,—Mr. Thrale I think and hope much better. I go to them very often, and they come here certainly once every week, and Mrs. Thrale generally oftener. I have had some charming meetings at their house, which, though in brief, I will enumerate.

At the first, the party was Mr. Murphy, Mr. Seward, Mr. Evans, Dr. Solander,[2] and Lady Ladd. Dr. Johnson had not then settled in the borough.

Mr. Evans is a clergyman, very intimate with the Thrales, and a good-humoured and a sensible man.

Dr. Solander, whom I never saw before, I found very sociable, full of talk, information, and entertainment. My father has very exactly named him, in calling him a philosophical gossip.

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[1] Perhaps John Hunter of the Museum in Leicester Fields, 1728-93. But there was another "Dr." Hunter, who attended the Burney family.

[2] Daniel Charles Solander, 1736-82, botanist, had accompanied Cook in 1768 in the *Endeavour*. At this date he was keeper of the printed books in the British Museum (see *post*, p. 320.)

The others you have heard of frequently.

Mr. Murphy "made at me" immediately;—he took a chair next mine, and would talk to me, and to me only, almost all the day. He attacked me about my play, entreated me most earnestly to show him the rest of it, and made it many compliments. I told him that I had quite given it up—that I did not like it now it was done, and would not venture to try it, and therefore could not consent to show it. He quite flew at this—vowed I should not be its judge.

"What!" cried he, "condemn in this manner!—give up such writing! such dialogue! such character! No, it must not be. Show it me—you shall show it me. If it wants a few stage-tricks trust it with me, and I will put them in. I have had a long experience in these matters. I know what the galleries will and will not bear. I will promise not to let it go out of my hands without engaging for its success."

This, and much more, he went on with in a low voice, obliging me by the nature of the subject to answer him in the same, and making everybody stare at the closeness of our confab, which I believe was half its pleasure to him, for he loves mischievous fun as much as if he was but sixteen.

While we were thus discoursing, Mr. Seward, who I am sure wondered at us, called out, "Miss Burney, you don't hear Dr. Solander." I then endeavoured to listen to him, and found he was giving a very particular account to the company of Captain Cook's appearance at Khamschatka—a subject which they naturally imagined would interest me. And so indeed it did; but it was in vain, for Mr. Murphy would not hear a word; he continued talking to me in a whisper, and distracted my attention in such a manner that I heard both and understood neither.

Again, in a few minutes, Mr. Seward called out, "Miss Burney, you don't hear this"; and yet my neighbour would not regard him, nor would allow that I should. Exhortation followed exhortation, and entreaty entreaty, till, almost out of patience, Mr. Seward a third time exclaimed,

"Why, Miss Burney, Dr. Solander is speaking of your brother's ship."

I was half ashamed, and half ready to laugh.

"Ay," said Mrs. Thrale, "Mr. Murphy and Miss Burney are got to flirtation, so what care they for Captain Cook and Captain Clerke."

"Captain Cook and Captain Clerke?" repeated Mr. Murphy,—"who mentioned them?"

Everybody laughed.

"Who?" said Mrs. Thrale. "Why Dr. Solander has been talking of them this hour."

"Indeed!" exclaimed he, "why, then, it's Miss Burney's fault: she has been talking to me all this time on purpose to prevent my listening."

Did you ever hear such assurance?

I can write no more particulars of my visit, as my letter is so monstrously long already; but in conclusion, Dr. Solander invited the whole party to the Museum[1] that day week, and Lady Ladd, who brought me home, invited us all to dine with her after seeing it. This was by all accepted, and I will say something of it hereafter. I am very sorry I have forgot to ask for franks, and must not forget to ask your pardon.

And so God bless you, my dear daddy! and bless Mrs. Gast, Mrs. Ham, and Kitty, and do you say God bless your ever loving and affectionate

F. B.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 318 *n.*

MR. CRISP TO MISS F. BURNEY

CHESSINGTON, *February* 23, 1780.

MY DEAR FANNIKIN—Our letters crossed each other. I did not receive yours till the day after mine was sent off, otherwise I should not have then omitted what you seemed to require—my notions on the subject of Mr. Sheridan's importunity. My great scruple all along has been the consideration of the great stake you are playing for, how much you have to lose, and how unequal your delicate and tender frame of mind would be to sustain the shock of a failure of success, should that be the case. You can't easily imagine how much it goes against me to say anything that looks like discouragement to a spirit already too diffident and apprehensive. Nothing but so rooted a regard for my Fannikin, and her peace and happiness, as I feel at this instant, could ever have prevailed on me to have used that freedom with her, which, though all authors pretend to insist on from the friends they consult, yet ninety-nine out of a hundred are offended at; and not only so, but bear a secret grudge and enmity for the sincerity they have demanded, and in some measure extorted. I myself have met with and smarted for some instances of this kind; but that shall not hinder me from delivering my real sentiments to those I love when called upon, and particularly my own creature, Fannikin, for I think I know her generosity too well to suspect her of taking amiss what can proceed from no motive but friendship and fidelity.

Well, then, this is my idea. The play has wit enough and enough—but the story and the incidents don't appear to me interesting enough to seize and keep hold of the attention and eager expectations of the generality of audiences. This, to me, is its capital defect.

The omissions you propose are right, I think; but how the business of the piece is to go on with such omissions and alterations as you mention, it is impossible for me to know. What you mean to leave out—the club and the larger share of Smatter and Dabbler—seems to have been the main subject of the play. Cecilia's loss and unexpected restoration of her fortune, is not a new incident by any means; however, anything is preferable to Censor's interfering in the business by his unaccountable generosity.[1]

Now, as to the very great importance, and indeed (to my thinking) the indispensable necessity, of an interesting plot or story,—let me recommend you to borrow, or get from the circulating library, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber.* This book chance has thrown in my way since I last wrote to you; and in running it over I very unexpectedly met with a full and copious detail of all my very thoughts on this subject, to a most minute exactness. The passage itself begins thus:

"Reader—by your leave—I will but just speak a word or two to any author, that has not yet writ one word of his next play, and then I will come to my point again."

He then goes on, ending with these words, viz.:—

"I imagined these observations might convince some future author, of how great advantage a fable well planned must be to a man of any tolerable genius."[2]

The echo of my sentiments of the matter for these forty years past! No man living was ever a better judge of stage interests and stage politics than Cibber.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 316.

[2] Cibber's *Apology*, 1740, pp. 201-202.

What to advise, I profess I know not—only thus much: I should have a much greater deference for the opinion of Sheridan than of Murphy; I take him in himself to be much deeper; and he is besides deeply interested in the fate of whatever he brings forward on his own stage. Upon the whole, as he is so pressing to see what you have done, I should almost incline to consent.

Your other daddy and madam were kind enough last Sunday to come on purpose from London to see me; for which I think myself greatly obliged to them. They tell me of a delightful tour you are to make this autumn on the other side of the water, with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Murphy, etc. Where will you find such another set? Oh, Fanny, set this down as the happiest period of your life; and when you come to be old and sick, and health and spirits are fled (for the time may come), then live upon remembrance, and think that you have had your share of the good things of this world, and say,—For what I have received, the Lord make me thankful!

And now, my Fanny, let me hear from you soon the result of your theatrical councils; also a continuation of your own other adventures, and likewise (what you have hitherto shirked me of) the Susannitical Journal of Brighthelmstone.—Your loving daddy, S. C.

Journal resumed

Bath, April 7.—A thousand thanks, my dearest Susy, for your kind and very satisfactory letter. I had, indeed, been extremely anxious to hear of poor Pacchierotti, for the account of his illness in the newspapers had alarmed me very much. You are very good for being so circumstantial. I long to hear of his more perfect recovery, for, to use his own words, he has made himself an interest in my regard more than for his profession. Merely for the profession, never can I admire more passionately than I did Millico;[1] but I now consider Pacchierotti as an estimable friend, and as such I value him sincerely and affectionately, and you, I think, my little Susanna, are in this also of "one mind" with me.

Don't be angry that I have been absent so long without writing, for I have been so entirely without a moment to myself, except for dressing, that I really have not had it in my power. This morning, being obliged to have my hair dressed early, I am a prisoner, that I may not spoil it by a hat, and therefore I have made use of my captivity in writing to my dear Susy; and, briefly, I will now chronicle what has occupied me hitherto.

The journey was very comfortable; Mr. Thrale was charmingly well and in very good spirits, and Mrs. Thrale must be charming, well or ill. We only went to Maidenhead Bridge the first night, where I found the caution given me by Mr. Smelt,[2] of not attempting to travel near Windsor on a hunting-day, was a very necessary one, as we were with difficulty accommodated even the day after the hunt; several stragglers yet remaining at all the inns, and we heard of nothing but the king and royal huntsmen and huntswomen.

The second day we slept at Speen Hill, and the third day we reached Devizes.

And here, Mrs. Thrale and I were much pleased with our hostess, Mrs. Lawrence, who seemed something above her station in her inn. While we were at cards before supper, we were much surprised by the sound of a pianoforte. I jumped up, and ran to listen whence it proceeded. I found it came from the next room, where the overture to the "Buona Figliuola" was performing. The playing was very decent, but as the music was not quite new to me, my curiosity was not whole ages in satisfying, and therefore I returned to finish the rubber.

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[1] Giuseppe Millico, *b*. 1739, came to England in April 1772 (see *Early Diary*, 1889, i. 186). Miss Burney calls him "the divine Millico."

[2] Leonard Smelt, 1719-1800, Deputy-Governor to the Royal Princes.

Don't I begin to talk in an old cattish manner of cards?

Well, another deal was hardly played, ere we heard the sound of a voice, and out I ran again. The singing, however, detained me not long, and so back I whisked: but the performance, however indifferent in itself, yet surprised us at the Bear at Devizes, and, therefore, Mrs. Thrale determined to know from whom it came. Accordingly, she tapped at the door. A very handsome girl, about thirteen years old, with fine dark hair upon a finely-formed forehead, opened it. Mrs. Thrale made an apology for her intrusion, but the poor girl blushed and retreated into a corner of the room: another girl, however, advanced, and obligingly and gracefully invited us in, and gave us all chairs. She was just sixteen, extremely pretty, and with a countenance better than her features, though those were also very good. Mrs. Thrale made her many compliments, which she received with a mingled modesty and pleasure, both becoming and interesting. She was, indeed, a sweetly-pleasing girl.

We found they were both daughters of our hostess, and born and bred at Devizes. We were extremely pleased with them, and made them a long visit, which I wished to have been longer. But though those pretty girls struck us so much, the wonder of the family was yet to be produced. This was their brother, a most lovely boy of ten years of age, who seems to be not merely the wonder of their family, but of the times, for his astonishing skill in drawing.[1] They protest he has never had any instruction, yet showed us some of his productions that were really beautiful. Those that were copies were delightful—those of his own composition amazing, though far inferior. I was equally struck with the boy and his works.

We found that he had been taken to town, and that all the painters had been very kind to him, and Sir Joshua Reynolds had pronounced him, the mother said, the most promising genius he had ever met with. Mr. Hoare[2] has been so charmed with this sweet boy's drawings that he intends sending him to Italy with his own son.

This house was full of books, as well as paintings, drawings, and music; and all the family seem not only ingenious and industrious, but amiable; added to which, they are strikingly handsome.

I hope we shall return the same road, that we may see them again.

I forgot to mention that when we were at Reading, we walked to see Coley, the seat of Miss Thompsons, sisters-in-law of Sir Philip Jennings Clerke. The house is large, old-fashioned, new vamped, and rambling.

I shall now skip to our arrival at this beautiful city, which I really admire more than I did, if possible, when I first saw it. The houses are so elegant, the streets are so beautiful, the prospects so enchanting. I could fill whole pages upon the general beauty of the place and country, but that I have neither time for myself, nor incitement for you, as I know nothing tires so much as description.

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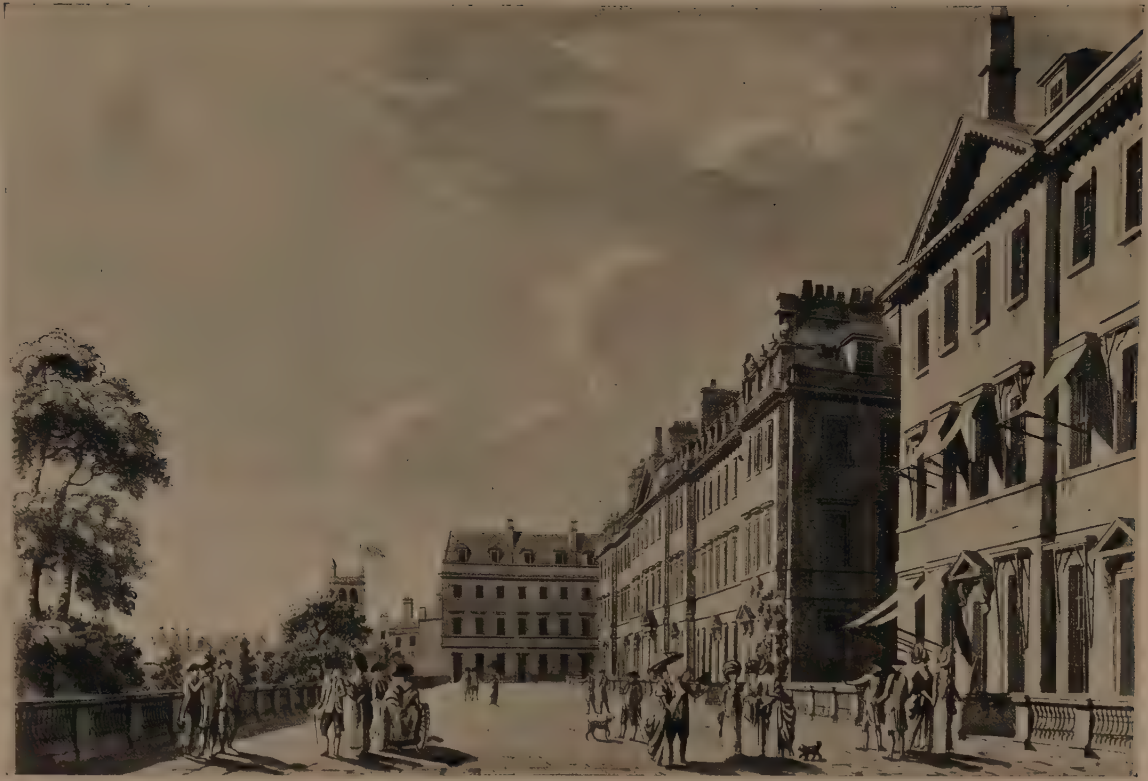
[1] Thomas Lawrence, 1769-1830, eventually Sir Thomas, and President of the Royal Academy.

[2] William Hoare, R.A., 1706-92. His plan was not carried out. The Lawrences moved to Oxford and Weymouth, then to Bath, and finally to London, where the young painter soon commanded a handsome income.



THE SOUTH PARADE AT BATH, 1784

We alighted at York House, and Mrs. Thrale sent immediately to Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, who spent the Easter holidays here. He came instantly, with his usual alacrity to oblige, and told us of lodgings upon the South Parade,[1] whither in the afternoon we all hied, and Mr. Thrale immediately hired a house at the left corner. It was most deliciously situated; we have meadows, hills, Prior Park,[2] "the soft-flowing Avon"—whatever Nature has to offer, I think, always in our view. My room commands all these; and more luxury for the eye I cannot form a notion of.

We stayed that night, Friday, at York House, and Sir Philip Clerke supped with us, and came to breakfast the next morning. I am quite sorry this Sir Philip is so violent and so wrong in his political opinions and conduct, for in private life he is all gentleness, good breeding, and friendliness. I was very sorry, too, when he left us, which he was obliged to do at noon, and to quit Bath the next day.

Well—we spent Saturday morn in removing hither, and then immediately followed an engagement. It was to spend the afternoon with some relations of Mrs. T.

The relations were Mrs. C——, an ugly, proud old woman, but marvellous civil to me; Mr. L——, a sensible man of eighty-two, strong, healthy, and conversable as he could have been at thirty-two; his wife, a dull, muzzy old creature; his sister, a ditto.

Our afternoon was horribly wearying.

When we came away, Mrs. Thrale ordered our chairs to the playhouse; Mr. Thrale would not accompany us. We were just in time for *The*

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[1] Smollett's "Matthew Bramble" also took lodgings in the South Parade.

[2] The seat of Fielding's "'Squire Allworthy," the famous Bathonian, Ralph Allen (1694-1764).

Padlock,[1] which was almost as bad to me as the company I had just left. Yet the performers here are uncommonly good: some of them as good as almost any we have in town.

Sunday.—We went to St. James's Church, heard a very indifferent preacher, and returned to read better sermons of our own choosing.

In the evening we had again an engagement. This, however, was far more agreeable than our last. It was at Mrs. Lambart's.[2] Mrs. Lambart is a widow of General Lambart, and a sister of Sir Philip Jennings. She is an easy, chatty, sensible woman of the world.

There was a good deal of company; among them, all that I much observed were two clergymen and a Miss Lewis.

One of the clergymen was Mr. W——,[3] a young man who has a house on the Crescent, and is one of the best supporters of Lady Miller's vase at Bath Easton.[4] He is immensely tall, thin, and handsome, but affected, delicate, and sentimentally pathetic; and his conversation about his own "feelings," about "amiable motives," and about the wind, which, at the Crescent, he said in a tone of dying horror, "blew in a manner really frightful!" diverted me the whole evening. But Miss Thrale, not content with private diversion, laughed out at his expressions, till I am sure he perceived and understood her merriment.

The young lady, Miss Lewis, is a daughter of the Dean of Ossory;[1] she is very handsome, and mighty gay and giddy, half tonish, and half hoydenish; and every other word she utters is "Horrible!"

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[1] A comic opera by Isaac Bickerstaffe, *d.* 1812 (?). It was first produced at Covent Garden in 1768.

[2] In Church Street.

[3] This was the Rev. Thomas Sedgewick Whalley, D.D., 1746-1828, Rector of Hagworthingham in Lincolnshire. He occupied the centre house in the Crescent. He was a refined dilettante, and art patron, Thomas Barker of Bath being one of his favourites. His *Journals and Correspondence* were edited in 1863 by the Rev. Hill Wickham. His portrait by Reynolds fully justifies the title given to him at Paris by Marie Antoinette of *Le bel Anglais*.

[4] See *post*, p. 415.

Well, I must now to Monday.

In the morning Miss Gregory called; she is here with Mrs. Montagu. She made a long visit, and she brought me a very polite message from sweet Mr. Smelt's daughter, Mrs. Cholmley, who had told Miss Gregory that her father had written to charge her to get acquainted with me, in terms too civil to repeat; and she was very willing, but did not know how.

"And so," said Miss Gregory, "I told her I would ask you."

I begged her to give my respects to Mrs. Cholmley, and to tell her I should certainly wait upon her.

In the evening we had company at home,—Mrs. Lambart, Miss Gregory, and Mrs. Montagu.

Mrs. Montagu was in very good spirits, and extremely civil to me, taking my hand, and expressing herself well pleased that I had accompanied Mrs. Thrale hither. She was very flashy, and talked away all the evening; but Miss Gregory was as much disposed to talk herself, and she took to me this night as she did to Mrs. Campbell at Mrs. Ord's, and, therefore, I could scarce hear a word that Mrs. Montagu said.

[*Bath, April* 9.—Tuesday morning we spent in walking all over the town, viewing the beautiful Circus, the company-crowded Pump-room, and the exquisite Crescent, which, to all the excellence of architecture that adorns the Circus, adds all the delights of nature that beautify the Parades. We also made various visits, and I called upon Mrs. Cholmley, but was not admitted, and also upon Miss

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[1] John Lewis, Dean of Ossory, 1755-84.

Bowdler, who was also invisible. We then went to Mrs. Lambart's, where we again met Miss Lewis, and heard abundance of Bath chit-chat and news, and were all invited for Friday to cards. I am, however, determined never to play but when we are quite alone, and a fourth is indispensably wanted. I have, therefore, entreated Mrs. Thrale not to make known that I can.

In the evening we went to the play, and saw *The School for Scandal* and *The Critic*; both of them admirably well acted, and extremely entertaining.

Wednesday,] in the morning, Miss Bowdler[1] returned my visit: I was glad to see her, for old acquaintance' sake. She does not look well, but is more agreeable than formerly, and seems to have thrown aside her pedantry and ostentatious display of knowledge; and, therefore, as she is very sensible, and uncommonly cultivated, her conversation and company are very well worth seeking. I introduced her to Mrs. Thrale, which I saw was a great gratification, as she had long known her by fame, and wished much to be presented to her.

[We had much talk of Teignmouth, and I inquired about my old friend Mr. Crispen, who I find now lives at Clifton.

Mrs. Thrale inquired of Miss Bowdler if she knew anything of Miss Cooper, and where she lived? And then Miss Bowdler, in a very respectful manner, begged permission to invite us all to meet Miss Cooper at her father's, for that very evening, as Mrs. Montagu was also engaged there; and Mrs. Thrale, with her usual frankness and good humour, accepted the invitation without further ceremony.

Accordingly,] in the afternoon we all went to Alfred Buildings, where Mr. Bowdler lives. He was not at home, but his wife and two daughters did the honours.

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[1] Frances Bowdler, sister of Thomas Bowdler of the expurgated *Family Shakespeare*, 1818. Miss Burney had met her at Teignmouth in 1773.

We found Mrs. Montagu, Miss Gregory, Miss Cooper, and Mrs. Sydney Lee already assembled.

This Mrs. Sydney Lee is a maiden sister of the famous rebel General.[1] She is a very agreeable woman.

Miss Cooper you must have heard of: she is Miss Streatfield's darling friend, and a very amiable and gentle old maid. I have seen her twice at Streatham.

Mrs. Bowdler is very sensible and intelligent, and my namesake[2] was very rational and entertaining.

Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Thrale both flashed away admirably; but I was again engrossed by Miss Gregory, who raved of nothing but Mr. Seward.

When we returned home I found a note from Mrs. Cholmley,[3] [the most elegantly civil that ever was written, apologising for not having called upon me on account of her indifferent state of health, expressing her desire to be known to a daughter of Dr. Burney, for whom, she says, she must ever retain the highest esteem and respect, and] inviting me to meet Mrs. Montagu on Friday.

I was already engaged to a large party at Mrs. Lambart's, but my kind Mrs. Thrale, perceiving which way my inclination led, undertook to make my apologies for the beginning of the evening, and to allow me to join her after my own visit was paid. I therefore wrote my thanks to Mrs. Cholmley, and accepted her invitation.

Thursday.—The kindness of this family seems daily to increase towards me; not indeed that of Mrs. Thrale, for it cannot, so sweetly and delightfully she keeps it up; she has not left herself power to do more;—but Mr Thrale evidently interests himself more and more about me weekly—as does his fair daughter.

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[1] Charles Lee, 1731-82, an English officer who had joined the insurgent American colonies. He was at one time second in command to Washington, but had retired in 1779 after being court-martialled for disaster.

[2] *i.e.* Frances Bowdler.

[3] In the Circus.

This morning a milliner was ordered to bring whatever she had to recommend, I believe, to our habitation, and Mr. Thrale bid his wife and daughter take what they wanted, and send him the account.

But, not content with this, he charged me to do the same. You may imagine if I did. However, finding me refractory, he absolutely insisted upon presenting me with a complete suit of gauze lino,[1] and that in a manner that showed me a refusal would greatly disoblige him. And then he very gravely desired me to have whatever I pleased at any time, and to have it added to his account. And so sincere I know him to be, that I am sure he would be rather pleased than surprised if I should run him up a new bill at this woman's. He would fain have persuaded me to have taken abundance of other things, and Mrs. Thrale seemed more gratified than with what he did for herself. Tell my dear father all this.

Dr. Woodward called this morning. He is a physician here, and a chatty, agreeable man.

At dinner, we had Dr. Harrington,[2] another physician, and my father's friend and correspondent, upon whose account he was excessively civil to me. He is very sensible, keen, quiet, and well-bred.

In the evening we were all engaged to the Belvidere, to visit Mrs. Byron,[3] who arrived at Bath two days before.

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[1] A silk gossamer stuff (Davies's *Supplemental Glossary*).

[2] Dr. Henry Harington, 1727-1816, was a famous Bath physician and musician. He was a friend of Dr. Burney and Rauzzini.

[3] Sophia Trevannion, wife of Rear-Admiral John Byron of the *Narrative*, 1723-86, and grandmother of Lord Byron.

The Belvidere is a most beautiful spot; it is on a high hill, at one of the extremities of the town, of which, as of the Avon and all the adjacent country, it commands a view that is quite enchanting.

Poor Mrs. Byron is very far from well, though already better than when I last saw her in town; but her charming spirits never fail her, and she rattled and shone away with all the fire and brilliancy of vigorous health. Augusta[1] is much improved in her person, but preserves the same engaging simplicity of manners that distinguished her at Brighthelmstone. She was quite overjoyed at meeting me, and talked quite in raptures of renewing our acquaintance and seeing me often. I never hardly met with so artless an enthusiasm for what she loves as in this fair Augusta, whom I must love in return, whether I will or not.

In our way home we stopped at the theatre, and saw the farce of the "Two Misers"[2]—wretched, wretched stuff indeed!

Friday.—In the evening I had to make my first visit to Mrs. Cholmley, and a most formidable business it was, for she had had company to dinner, and a formal circle was already formed when my name was announced; added to which, as I knew not the lady of the house from her guests, you may imagine I entered the room without astonishing the company by my brass. Mrs. Cholmley made it as little awkward as she could to me, by meeting me almost at the door. She received me in a most elegant manner, making all sorts of polite speeches about my goodness in making the first visit, and so forth. She seems very gentle and well-bred, and perfectly amiable in character and disposition.

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[1] Augusta Barbara Charlotte, Admiral Byron's third daughter, who afterwards married Vice-Admiral Christopher Parker, and *d.* 1824.

[2] A musical farce by Kane O'Hara, 1714-82, acted at Covent Garden in 1775.

The party I found assembled was Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Poyntz, a relation of Lady Spencer, Miss Gregory, Lord Mulgrave, Hon. Augustus Phipps, Sir Cornwallis Maud, Mr. Cholmley, Miss Ann Cholmley, and one or two more that I did not hear named.

Mrs. Cholmley very obligingly placed me between herself and Miss Gregory, who is now become the most intimate acquaintance I have here, and I find her far more agreeable than I believed she could have been. Mrs. Cholmley and I talked of nothing but our fathers;[1] she told me I could not have more affection and respect for her father than she had for mine; and I told her that if we should make any acquaintance with each other, I hoped nothing but good would come of it, for no connection ever had a more dutiful foundation; and then we went on, she praising Dr. Burney, and I Mr. Smelt, till our party lessened, and all the gentlemen were gone.

Mrs. Poyntz, then, who had been at our side of the room, went over to Mrs. Montagu, who whispered her, and looked towards me.

"Ay," said Miss Gregory, "Mrs. Montagu has just now, I believe, found out Miss Burney."

"Yes," said Mrs. Montagu, smiling at me, "I never knew her till this moment; but it was very cruel in you, Miss Gregory, to let me remain so long in ignorance; you know I cannot see anybody three yards off. I asked my Lord Mulgrave who it was, but he could not tell me; and I asked Sir Cornwallis, but he did not know; at last Mrs. Poyntz informed me."

By the way, that Mrs. Poyntz is a very sensible old gentlewoman. Of Lord Mulgrave and Sir Cornwallis I saw too little to speak.

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[1] Dr. Burney and Mr. Smelt. Mr. Smelt (see *ante*, p. 324) was a great favourite with George III.

I was obliged now to take my own leave; and Mrs. Montagu, when I was departing, arose and followed me, and took my hand, and inquired earnestly concerning Mr. Thrale, who is a great favourite with her, and was all graciousness to me: and Mrs. Cholmley made me promise to repeat my visit; and all did wondrous well.

Mr. Cholmley handed me to the chair, and I then proceeded to Mrs. Lambart's. Here I found two rooms with company: whist-players in one, and a commerce party in the other. Fortunately, I escaped the latter by being very late. Among the folks were the Dean of Ossory, who is a well-bred gentlemanlike dean, Mrs. Lewis, his wife, a very civil woman, and his daughter, etc.

When I had given an account of my preceding visit to my own friends, Mrs. Lambart made me sit next her, for she did not play herself, and we had some very comfortable talk till the commerce table broke up, and then a certain Miss Willis came to my other side, and entered into conversation with me very facetiously. A mighty good-natured, foolish girl.

While we were prating, Mr. E——, the clergyman I have mentioned before, joined us, and told Miss Willis how to call herself in Latin.

“Go,” said he, “to your father, and say, ‘How do you do, Mr. Voluntas-est?’”

This conceited absurdity diverted her and Miss Lewis amazingly.

“But, dear!” she cried, “it's so long I shan't remember it. I do think Latin words sound very odd. I daresay, Miss Burney, you know Latin very well?”

I assured her to the contrary.

“Well,” said the little fool, “I know one word.”

"Do you? pray what is it?"

"Why, it's *cogitabund.* It's a very droll word."[1]

. . . . . .

Monday.—Lord Mulgrave,[2] Augustus Phipps, Miss Cooper, Dr. Harrington, and Dr. Woodward dined with us.

I like Lord Mulgrave very much. He has more wit, and a greater readiness of repartee, than any man I have met with this age. During dinner he was all brilliancy, but I drew myself into a little scrape with him, from which I much wanted some of his wit to extricate myself. Mrs. Thrale was speaking of the House of Commons, and lamenting that she had never heard any debates there.

"And now," said she, "I cannot, for this General Johnson has turned us all out most barbarously."

"General Johnson?" repeated Lord Mulgrave.

"Ay, or colonel—I don't know what the man was, but I know he was no man of gallantry."

"Whatever he was," said his lordship, "I hope he was a land officer."

"I hope so, too, my lord," said she.

"No, no, no," cried Mr. Thrale, "it was Commodore Johnson."

"That's bad, indeed!" said Lord Mulgrave, laughing. "I thought, by his manners, he had belonged to the army."

"True," said I: "they were hardly polished enough for the sea."

This I said *à demi-voix,* and meant only for

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[1] Thoughtful. The word is not in Johnson, but the *Supplemental Glossary* of Davies gives examples of its use from Tom Brown and Southey.

[2] Constantine John Phipps, second Baron Mulgrave, 1744-92. In 1777 he was a Lord of the Admiralty, and in 1778 commanded the *Courageous* with distinction in the Ushant expedition.

Mrs. Thrale; but Lord Mulgrave heard and drew up upon them, and pointing his finger at me with a threatening air, exclaimed,

"Don't you speak, Miss Burney? What's this, indeed?"

They all stared, and to be sure I rouged[1] pretty high.

"I did not expect this from you," continued he, "but take care! I shall tell you of it a twelvemonth hence!"

I could not, at the moment, understand him, but I afterwards found he was thinking of poor Jem, and meant to threaten me with putting the quarrel into his hands. And so, for more reasons than one, I only answered by laughing.

"Miss Burney," said Mrs. Thrale, "should be more respectful to be sure, for she has a brother at sea herself."

"I know it," said he, "and for all her, we shall see him come back from Kamschatka as polished a beau as any he will find."

Poor Jem! God send him safe back, polished or rough.

Lord Mulgrave's brother Edmund is just entered into the army.

"He told me t'other day," said his lordship, "that he did not like the thoughts of being a parson."

"'Very well,' said I, 'you are old enough to choose for yourself; what will you be then?'

"'Why, a soldier,' says he.

"'A soldier? will you so? Why then the

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[1] Blushed. Like Mme. de Sévigné, Miss Burney possessed an "*extrême facilité à rougir.*" "Nobody," she writes elsewhere, "I believe, has so *very* little command of countenance as myself." "Poor Fanny's face," said her father, "tells us what she thinks, whether she will or no" (*Early Diary*, 1889, i. lxxxii.). Mrs. Delany had the same gift of sensibility. "She was almost the only person he ever saw," Burke told Hannah More, "who at eighty-eight blushed like a girl" (H. More's *Memoirs*, 1834, ii. 97).

best thing you can do is to embark with your brother Henry immediately, for you won't know what to do in a regiment by yourself.' Well, no sooner said than done! Henry was just going to the West Indies in Lord Harrington's regiment, and Edmund ordered a chaise, and drove to Portsmouth after him. The whole was settled in half an hour."

Curious enough. But I am sorry Edmund has taken this freak. He is an amiable young man, and I had rather he had kept clear of this fighting system, and "things of that sort."

In the evening, we had our company enlarged. Mrs. Montagu came first, and was followed by Miss Gregory, Mrs. Sydney Lee, Mrs. Bowdler, and Fanny Bowdler.

While I made tea, Lord Mulgrave sat next to me, and with a comical mock resentment told me he had not yet forgiven me for that sneer at his profession.

"However," he added, "if I can be of any use to you here at the tea-table, out of neighbourly charity, I will."

I declined his offer with thanks, but when I was putting away the tea-chest,

"So," he cried, taking it from me, "cannot I put that down? am I not polished enough for that?'

And afterwards, upon other similar opportunities, he said,

"So you are quite determined not to trust me?"

Wednesday.—I received Charlotte's most agreeable account of Edward's stained drawings from *Evelina*,[1] and I am much delighted that he means them for the Exhibition, and that we shall thus show off together. His notion of putting a portrait of Dr. Johnson into Mr. Villars's parlour was charming. I shall tell the doctor of it in my next letter, for he makes me write to him.

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[1] Charlotte Burney's letter is printed in the *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. pp. 288-91. The "stained drawings" were three designs for *Evelina*, in which Mme. Duval, Captain Mirvan, Mr. Villars, the heroine and her

In the evening we had Mrs. Lambart, who brought us a tale, called *Edwy and Edilda*,[1] by the sentimental Mr. W——, and unreadably soft, and tender, and senseless it is.

Thursday morning, April 13.—I am now come to the present time, and will try, however brief, to be tolerably punctual.

Dr. Johnson has sent a bitter reproach to Mrs. Thrale of my not writing to him, for he has not yet received a scrawl I have sent him. He says Dr. Barnard,[2] the provost of Eton, has been singing the praises of my book, and that old Dr. Lawrence[3] has read it through three times within this last month! I am afraid he will pass for being superannuated for his pains!

"But don't tell Burney this," adds Dr. Johnson, "because she will not write to me, and values me no more than if I were a Branghton!"

Our party to-night at the Dean of Ossory's has by no means proved enchanting, yet Mrs. Montagu was there, and Hoare, the painter,[4] and the agreeable Mrs. Lambart. But I was unfortunate enough not to hear one word from any of them, by being pestered with witlings all the night.

First I was seated next the eldest Miss L——,[5] not the pretty girl I have mentioned, Charlotte,

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father, were all introduced. Archdeacon Burney, of Surbiton, has one of these delicate little pictures, which were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780 (Nos. 418-20). Edward Burney's heroine is said to have resembled the beautiful Sophia Streatfield.

[1] This was a tale in verse, and in five parts, published in 1779. Miss Seward, unlike Miss Burney, called it her "poetic darling."

[2] Dr. Edward Barnard, 1717-81, Provost of Eton and Canon of Windsor.

[3] Dr. Thomas Lawrence, 1711-83, the friend and physician of Johnson.

[4] See *ante*, p. 326.

[5] Lewis.

who is the second daughter. This Miss L—— is very heavy and tiresome, though she was pleased to promise to call upon me, and to cultivate acquaintance with me, in most civil terms.

This was my fag till after tea, and then Mr. E—— joined us; I have always endeavoured to shirk this gentleman, who is about as entertaining and as wise as poor Mr. Pugh, but for whom not having the same regard, I have pretty soon enough of him; and so, as I rather turned away, he attacked Miss L——, and I spent another half-hour in hearing them.

After this, he aimed at me downright, inquiring if I had been at Bath before, and so forth, and a mighty insipid discourse ensued.

This lasted till Miss L—— proposed a "miss" party in the next room. Accordingly, off we moved; Miss Gregory went first, and I was following, when she ran back, and said the Dean was there writing. I would then also have made off, but he came out after us, and taking my hand, would lead me into his library, protesting he had just sealed his letter. And then the other misses followed, and that wearisome Mr. E——, and another young man yet sillier.

The dean is very musical, and was much disappointed, I believe, that I did not play to him. However, we had a good deal of talk together, and he promised to contrive for me a hearing of Miss Guest, a lady whose pianoforte-playing I have heard extolled by all here, and whom I shall be much obliged to him for meeting with.

Soon after we went to join the party in the next room. And then two hours, I believe, were consumed in the most insipid manner possible. I will give you a specimen, though, to judge of.

Mr. E.—"I never had the pleasure of being in company with Mrs. Montagu before—I was quite pleased at it."

And yet the booby could not stay where she was!

"Mrs. Montagu! let's see," he continued, "pray, Miss Burney, did she not write *Shakspeare Moralised?*"

I simpered a little, I believe, but turned to Miss Gregory to make the answer.

"No, sir," said she, "only an *Essay on the Genius of Shakspeare.*"

"I think," said this wight, "nobody must have so much pleasure at a play as Mrs. Montagu, if it's well done; if not, nobody must suffer so much, for that's the worst of too much knowledge, it makes people so difficult."

"Ay, that is to say," said the other wiseacre, "that the more wisdom, the less happiness."

"That's all the better," said Miss L——, "for there are more people in the world ignorant than wise."

"Very true," said Mr. E——; "for, as Pope says,

> "If ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise."[1]

Pope says! Did you ever hear such "witlings"?

But I won't write a word more about the evening —it was very stupid, and that's enough.

. . . . . .

We see Mrs. Montagu very often, and I have already spent six evenings with her at various houses.

I am very glad at this opportunity of seeing so much of her; for, allowing a little for parade and ostentation, which her power in wealth, and rank in literature, offer some excuse for, her conversation is very agreeable; she is always reasonable and sensible, and sometimes instructive and entertaining; and I think of our Mrs. Thrale, we may say the very reverse, for she is always entertaining and instructive, and sometimes reasonable and sensible; and I write this because she is just now looking over me—not but what I think it too!

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[1] Gray's "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," last lines.

MR. CRISP TO MISS F. BURNEY

April 27, 1780.

MY DEAR FANNIKIN—I am very glad you are now with the Thrales, in the midst of the Bath circle. Your time could not be better employed, for all your St. Martin's daddy wanted to retain you for some other purpose. You are now at school, the great school of the world, where swarms of new ideas and new characters will continually present themselves before you,

> which you'll draw in,
> As we do air, fast as 'tis ministered![1]

My sister Gast, in her younger days, was a great favourite with an old lady who was a particular crony and intimate of old Sarah Marlborough, who, though much of the jade, had undoubtedly very strong parts, and was indeed remarkably clever. When Mrs. Hinde (the old lady) would sometimes talk to her about books, she'd cry out, "Prithee, don't talk to me about books; I never read any books but men and cards!" But let anybody read her book,[2] and then tell me if she did not draw characters with as masterly a hand as Sir Joshua Reynolds.

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[1] *Cymbeline*, Act. I. Sc. i. (not textual).

[2] *The Account of the Conduct of the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough*, 1742, was said to be dictated by her to Nathaniel Hooke, the younger, *d.* 1763, who received a suspiciously large sum for his services as scribe.

The portion you allowed me of your Tunbridge and Brighton Journal I sucked in with much pleasure and avidity. Why, you have begun already, and make good what I have said above—you take down whatever you see. Sophy Streatfield's mother is a character entirely new, and strongly marked. I pronounce it to be like, and, though to a degree uncommon, is natural.

I am glad the Attorney-General is a Scotchman, for I have heard it is a settled observation, that the Scotch, though deeply learned, great lawyers, great philosophers, physicians, historians, mathematicians, etc., are remarkable for having no turn, neither talents nor relish, for humour. Does not one of the letters in Swift's works speak of some bishop who was a Scot, and when asked his opinion of *Gulliver's Travels*, wondered how people could read such a heap of nonsensical, improbable lies? I hope Mr. Wedderburne is a better judge of law than of satire and ridicule!

Mrs. Montagu, too! How it flatters me to have my idea of her, formed above thirty years ago, confirmed by this instance.

I believe I have told you of several letters the Duchess of Portland showed me of hers formerly (for I had no acquaintance with herself), so full of affectation, refinement, attempts to philosophise, talking metaphysics—in all which particulars she so bewildered and puzzled herself and her readers, and showed herself so superficial, nay, really ignorant in the subjects she paraded on—that, in my own private mind's pocket-book, I set her down for a vain, empty, conceited pretender, and little else. I know I am now treading on tender ground; therefore mum for your life, or rather for my life. Were Mrs. Thrale to know of my presumption, and that I dare to vent such desperate treason to her playmate, what would she say to me?

You take no notice of several particulars I want to hear of. Your unbeautiful, clever heroine,[1] beset all round for the sake of her great fortune—what is become of her? I am persuaded she'd make her own fortune, whatever were the fate of her hunters. The idea is new and striking, and presents a large field for unhackneyed characters, observations, subjects for satire and ridicule, and numberless advantages you'd meet with by walking in such an untrodden path.

Have you yet met with Colley Cibber, and read the passage I recommended to you?[2]

I can't say I am sorry your affair with Mr. Sheridan is at present at a stand. In the meantime, the refusal coming from yourself, and not the manager, tells highly in your favour: your coyness will tend to enhance your fame greatly in public opinion.

'Tis expectation makes the blessing dear![3]

Your loving daddy,
S. C.

Journal resumed

Bath, Friday.—This evening we have all been at Mrs. Montagu's, where we met Mrs. and Miss Bowdler, Lord Mulgrave, Mr. Cholmley, and Miss Cooper. Miss Gregory, of course. Poor Mrs. Cholmley never ventures out of her own house in an evening, as her health is extremely delicate.

We had a very entertaining evening, for Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Thrale, and Lord Mulgrave talked all the talk, and talked it so well, no one else had a wish beyond hearing them.

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[1] A reference to the first sketch of *Cecilia* (see *ante*, p. 312).

[2] See *ante*, p. 322.

[3] Sir John Suckling, *Against Fruition* (not textual).

Just before we came away, Miss Bowdler, who had been seated so far from me that I had not once spoken with her, crossed over to me, and said,

"I have been longing this great while to get to you, but could not bear to cross the circle; but there is a lady now at Bath, an acquaintance of mine, who wishes most eagerly to be an acquaintance of yours. She is a relation of Mr. Crisp."

"Mr. Crisp?" exclaimed I. "Don't you mean Mr. Crispen?"[1]

"No, Mr. Crisp!" repeated she; "and this lady wishes to see you so much."

"Oh, so do I to see her," quoth I, "if she is a relative of Mr. Crisp!"

"I have promised," continued she, "to endeavour to introduce her to you: will you, therefore, be so good as to meet her at my house?"

"Oh, with the greatest pleasure in the world, at any time you please!"

"She has heard a great deal of you, and has seen some of your letters, and is so impatient that the first moment you can spare——"

We then immediately settled next Monday morning, when I shall breakfast with them.

I am much delighted with the prospect of seeing a relation of my beloved daddy; but I am very much concerned, nay, and hurt, and half angry, that this lady, whose name it seems is Leigh, should have seen any of my letters. It is not fair, and I am sure it is not pleasant; however, I shall write to Chessington about it.

I have one packet ready for him, which I shall send to-morrow. I dare not scold in that, because I am so much in arrears, I have not assurance; but when I get out of that shame I shall at both him and Mrs. Gast, whom I believe to be an accomplice.

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[1] Mr. Crispen of Bath—"a half name-sake of my dear Daddy Crisp"—is mentioned in Fanny's "Teignmouth Journal" of 1773 (*Early Diary*, 1889, i. 220).

Saturday.—We walked in the beautiful meadows round the city all the morning, and went to drink tea with the ugly Mrs. C—— in the evening.

But no more of the beauty of meadows, or ugliness of poor old women, for I must now speak, and thank you (I would, if I knew how) for your very delightful packet, with the account of *Rinaldo.* You do very well to compassionate me for missing such a rehearsal—I was half moped in reading it; yet your relation, my dearest Susy, is the very next best thing to having been there, because it is so circumstantial, so warm, and so full of feeling. Oh, that I could but have been with you! Pacchierotti's having so much to do in the *cantabile* style is just what I have always wished, and I was almost thrilled only with your account of his energy, and fire, and exertion in his last song. Oh, that I could but have heard him! Do, pray, tell him how much I repine at my unfortunate absence.

April 29.—It is such an age since I have written, that had I not kept memorandums in my tablets, I could not possibly give any account of our proceedings.

But I shall begin where I left off, with again thanking you for your long relation of sweet Pacchierotti's visit after his illness, and for your design of making him begin his letter *sur-le-champ*; but in truth, I'm a little disappointed that he makes me wait so long. It will be very good-natured in you to tease him for me; but of all things I desire you not to help him; for much as I love your letters, I hate even Garrick thus at second hand,[1] and would not give a fig a-dozen for compilations of that sort. His note to Sheridan made me laugh, yet it much surprised me. Oh, these Italians! no meekness can guard them from the rage of revenge; yet I do most firmly believe nothing but almost intolerable ill-usage would provoke it in our Pac.

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[1] "She [Miss Burney] had never seen or heard a line of Churchill," says Lord Macaulay (*Edinburgh Review*, January 1843, p. 526). But this is a line from Churchill's *Rosciad* (*Poems*, 4th ed., 1769, i. 17).

[You managed very kindly for me in what you produced of my letter to him; and I wonder, indeed, in what, if you managed at all, you would not manage kindly for me. I am rather disappointed by your character of Miss Harrop; but the description of the benefit and the crowd diverted me so much, that I read it in public, and it merryfied us all.]

Now back to my memorandums.

Sunday.—We had Mrs. Byron and Augusta, and Mrs. Lee, to spend the afternoon. Augusta opened her whole heart to me, as we sat together, and told me all the affairs of her family. Her brother, Captain George Byron,[1] is lately returned from the West Indies, and has brought a wife with him from Barbadoes, though he was there only three weeks, and knew not this girl he has married till ten days before he left it. [A pleasant circumstance for this proud family!]

Poor Mrs. Byron seems destined for mortification and humiliation; yet such is her native fire, and so wonderful are her spirits, that she bears up against all calamity, and though half mad one day with sorrow and vexation, is fit the next to entertain an assembly of company;—and so to entertain them as to make the happiest person in the company, by comparison with herself, seem sad.

Augusta is a very amiably-ingenuous girl, and I love her the more for her love of her sisters: she talked to me of them all, but chiefly of Sophia, the youngest next to herself, but who, having an independent fortune, has quarrelled with her mother, and lives with one of her sisters, Mrs. Byron,[1] who married a first cousin, and son of Lord Byron.

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[1] George Anson Byron, 1758-93, married Charlotte Henrietta Dallas, of Dallas Castle, Jamaica.

"Ah, Miss Burney," she says continually, "if you knew Sophy, you would never bear me! she is so much better than I am,—and so handsome, and so good, and so clever,—and I used to talk to her of you by the hour together. She longs so to know you! 'Come,' she says, 'now tell me something more about your darling, Miss Burney.' But I ought to hope you may never see her, for if you did I should be so jealous!"

You wish to hear more of Mrs. Sydney Lee, but Augusta so entirely occupied me, that I could talk to no one else. But it was an odd sort of meeting between the sister of the rebel general, and the wife of the king's admiral! Mrs. Lee corresponds with her brother, and had a letter from him not long since,—almost torn, she says, to pieces, it had been so often opened and read in its voyage and journey.

Monday. — According to my appointment I breakfasted at the Bowdlers'. I was immediately introduced to my daddy's cousin, Miss Leigh. She is a tall, pretty, elegant girl, very sensible in her conversation, and very gentle and pleasing in her manners. I went prepared to like her for Mr. Crisp's sake, and I came away forced to like her for her own.

She came up to me in a very flattering manner, to tell me how much she had wished to make the acquaintance, and so forth: and then I told her how happy I was to see a relation of Mr. Crisp.

"What Mr. Crisp is it?" cried Mrs. Bowdler; "is it Sam?"

"Yes, ma'am," said I, staring at her familiarity.

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[1] Juliana Elizabeth, whose first husband was the Hon. William Byron, *d.* 1776, eldest son of the fifth Lord Byron.

"What!" cried she, again, "do you know little Sam Crisp?"

"I don't know for little," returned I, much surprised; "but he is the most intimate friend I have in the world, and the dearest. Do you know him then?"

"Do I?—yes, very well; I have known little Sam Crisp this long while."

"I can't imagine," cried I, half affronted at her manner of naming him, "why you should so 'little' him; I know not any one thing in the world in which he is little,—neither in head, nor heart,—neither in understanding, person, talents, nor mind."

"I fancy, ma'am," said Miss Leigh, "you hardly mean the Mr. Crisp Miss Burney does."

"I mean Sam Crisp," said she, "the Greenwich Traveller."[1]

This appeased me,—and we cleared up the mistake. But Mrs. Bowdler, though a very clever woman, is not a very delicate one. For, after this, Miss F. Bowdler had a letter brought her,—and presently read aloud from it, "I long extremely to know Miss Burney,—I hope she will not leave Bath till I return."

"Pray," said I, "may I ask who that is from?"

"From my sister Harriet,"[2] answered she.

"Yes," bolted out Mrs. Bowdler, "Harriet is one of the greatest admirers of *Evelina*."

These sort of abrupt speeches from people one hardly knows, are amazingly disagreeable: and Fanny Bowdler and Miss Leigh looked almost as awkward as myself.

The rest of the visit was almost wholly devoted to the praise of Mr. Crisp and Mrs. Gast; Miss Leigh adores Mrs. Gast, and so the brother and the sister were in good hands. She lives here with her mother, from whom she brought me many kind speeches, and whom I readily promised to wait upon.

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[1] This was another "Sam Crisp," of whom there is an account in the *Early Diary*, 1889, i. xxv. *et seq.*

[2] Henrietta Maria Bowdler, 1754-1830, who wrote poems, essays, etc. She was the youngest Miss Bowdler.

This evening, the only one since we came, we spent at home without company.

Tuesday.—We all went to Mrs. Bowdler's.

Mr. Bowdler, a very worthy, extremely little man (much less than Sam Crisp, I assure you, Mrs. Bowdler), appeared to-day; but only appeared, for he was shy, and spoke not. I have neglected to mention that the eldest Miss Bowdler,[1] by a dreadful cold, has quite lost her voice—lost all possible power of speech! I never heard of so extraordinary or so horrible a circumstance; she has been wholly dumb for three years. She seems perfectly resigned, and very mild and patient; but it is really painful to be in a room with her.

Besides their own family, we met Mr. Jerningham, the poet.[2] I have lately been reading his poems [if his they may be called]. He seems a mighty delicate gentleman; looks to be painted, and is all daintification in manner, speech, and dress.

The rest of the company I shall not trouble you with mentioning, save Miss Leigh, who sat next me, and filled up all the evening with hearing of Mr. Crisp, and talking of Mrs. Gast, except what was given to attending to Mr. Jerningham's singing to his own accompaniment upon the harp. He has about as much voice as Sacchini,[3] and very sweet-toned, though very English; and he sung and played with a fineness that somewhat resembled the man we looked at at Piozzi's benefit; for it required a painful attention to hear him. And while he sings, he looks the gentlest of all dying Corydons!

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[1] Jane Bowdler, 1743-84. Her poems and essays, published posthumously, ran through sixteen editions between 1787 and 1830.

[2] Edward Jerningham, 1727-1812, at this date author of *The Deserter*, 1770 (see *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 333 n.); and other poems; also of *Margaret of Anjou*, an "historical interlude."

[3] See *post*, vol. ii., under July 16, 1781.

Oh, what must he have thought of Mrs. Bowdler, who, when he was trying to recollect an air from the *Hermit*, called out,

"Pray, Mr. Jerningham, can't you sing us some of your own poetry?"

I really feared he would have fainted away at so gross a question; but, to my great relief, I observed he only looked down and smiled.

Wednesday.—At the desire of Miss F. Bowdler, we all went to the play, to see an actress she is dotingly fond of, Mrs. Siddons, in "Belvidera";[1] but instead of falling in love with her, we fell in love with Mr. Lee, who played "Pierre"[2]—and so well! I did not believe such an actor existed now our dear Garrick is gone; a better, except Garrick, never did I see—nor any one nearly equal to him—for sense, animation, looks, voice, grace—Oh, for everything the part would admit—he is indeed delightful.

Augusta Byron and Miss Gregory were of our party. They are both so much my friends, that they made me divide the evening between them.

In the evening we had Mrs. L——, a fat, round, panting, short-breathed old widow; and her daughter, a fubsy, good-humoured, laughing, silly, merry old maid. They are rich folks, and live together very comfortably, and the daughter sings—not in your fine Italian taste! no, that she and her mother agree to hold very cheap—but all about

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[1] Belvidera is the heroine of Otway's *Venice Preserved*, 1682. It was one of Mrs. Siddons's earliest characters.

[2] Lee of Bath, *d.* 1781, aged fifty-six. He was "extremely admired"—says the *Bath Chronicle* of February 21, 1781—"for the propriety, force, and justness of his delivery" (Penley's *Bath Stage*, 1892, p. 47).

Daphne, and Chloe, and Damon, and Phillis, and Jockey!

Friday.—In the morning, to my great concern, Lord Mulgrave called to take leave. He takes away with him more wit than he leaves behind him in all Bath, except what is lodged with Mrs. Thrale. As to Mrs. Montagu, she reasons well, and harangues well, but wit she has none. Mrs. Thrale has almost too much; for when she is in spirits, it bursts forth in a torrent almost overwhelming. Ah! 'tis a fault she has as much to herself as her virtues!

Mrs. Cholmley was so kind as to call this morning, and as I happened to be alone, we had a very comfortable chat together, and then Mrs. Thrale came in, and I had the pleasure of introducing them to each other. She is a woman of as much real delicacy as Mr. Jerningham (whom Lord Mulgrave calls a pink-and-white poet—for not only his cheeks, but his coat is pink) is a man of affected delicacy.

In the evening we went to visit Mrs. K——.

Mrs. K—— is a Welsh lady, of immense fortune, who has a house in the Crescent, and lives in a most magnificent style. She is about fifty, very good-humoured, well-bred, and civil, and her waist does not measure above a hogshead. She is not very deep, I must own; but what of that? If all were wits, where would be the admirers at them?

She received me very graciously, having particularly desired Mrs. Thrale to bring me: for she is an invalid, and makes no visits herself. She told me she knew my uncle at Shrewsbury very well.

"And pray, ma'am," says she, "how does Dr. Burney do?"

"Very well," I thanked her.

"Do you know Dr. Burney, ma'am?" said Mr. Thrale.

"No, sir, but I know his book. I think it's vastly pretty."

"Why, yes, ma'am," said Mrs. Thrale, "Dr. Burney has found out the art of making all people like both him and his book."

It is comical enough to see how she is always provoked at hearing these underlings praise him. She is ready to kill them for liking him, and has a whimsical notion that their applause degrades him.

"Yes, ma'am," answered Mrs. K——, "and there is somebody else too that has made all people like her book."

"True, ma'am; Dr. Burney's daughter inherits that art from him."

"Oh, ma'am, I was so entertained! Oh, dear! and I was quite ill too, ma'am, quite ill when I read it. But for all that—why, why, ma'am, I was as eager, and I wanted sadly to see the author."

Soon after this, arrived Mrs. Montagu and Miss Gregory. Miss Gregory brought a chair next to mine, and filled up the rest of my evening. I am really half sorry she appeared to such disadvantage that evening we saw her together at Mrs. Ord's, for I now begin to like her very much. She is frank, open, shrewd, and sensible, and speaks her opinion both of matters and things with a plumpness of honesty and readiness that both pleases and diverts me. And though she now makes it a rule to be my neighbour wherever we meet, she has never made me even a hint of a compliment; and that is not nothing as times go.

Afterwards, who should be announced but the author of the *Bath Guide*, Mr. Anstey.[1] I was now all eye; but not being able to be all ear, I heard but little that he said, and that little was scarce worth hearing. He had no opportunity of shining, and was as much like another man as you can imagine. It is very unfair to expect wonders from a man all at once; yet it was impossible to help being disappointed, because his air, look, and manner are mighty heavy and unfavourable to him.

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[1] Christopher Anstey, 1724-1805. His *New Bath Guide; or, Memoirs of the B–r–d Family*, had been published in 1766. From 1770 to 1805 he lived at Bath (No. 5 Royal Crescent). He is buried in Walcot Church; and has an honorary monument in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey.

But here see the pride of riches! and see whom the simple Mrs. K—— can draw to her house! However, her party was not thrown away upon her,—as I ought to say, because highly honoured by her exultingly whispering to Mrs. Thrale,

"Now, ma'am, now, Mrs. Thrale, I'm quite happy; for I'm surrounded with people of sense! Here's Mrs. Montagu, and Mrs. Thrale, and Mr. Anstey, and Miss Burney. I'm quite surrounded, as I may say, by people of sense!"

PART VIII

1780

Dr. Harrington—Chatterton—Bishop Porteus—A dull evening—A busy day—Mrs. Dobson—A MS. tragedy—A long story about nothing—An evening party—Pliny Melmoth—A comical day—A fine lady—A disappointed gentleman—A grand-daughter of Richardson—Bath diary resumed—Dr. Johnson—His fondness for Miss Burney—Sir Thomas Lawrence's family—Anstey—Bishop of Peterborough—A bishop's lady—The Duchess of Devonshire—Lady Spencer—Lord Mulgrave—Sea captains—Younger brothers—A mistake—Bath gossips—Anecdotes of Abyssinian Bruce—The Bowdler family—Table-talk—Admiral Byron—Mrs. Cholmley—An evening party—Anstey—Lady Miller—An agreeable rattle—A private concert—An accident—Lord Althorpe—A Bath beau—Lord Huntingdon—Lord Mulgrave—The Bishop of Peterborough—Mrs. Elizabeth Carter—Ferry's folly—A singular collation—An evening party—A public breakfast—A singular character—A female misanthrope—The results of Hume's Essays—Love and suicide—Beattie *versus* Bolingbroke—The Belvidere—Anecdote of Lord Mulgrave—A Bath ball—Love-making—Chit-chat—Blue-stockings—Flirtation—A good match—Mrs. Thrale—Match-making—The dangers of levity.

Saturday.—In the morning my ever kind Mrs. T. accompanied me to the Belvidere, to call upon Mrs. and Miss Leigh, and to invite the latter to our house in the evening, to meet the Bowdlers. Mrs. Leigh herself cannot make any visits, because she has dreadfully sprained her ankle, and is obliged to wear a large shoe and flannel. She is a very sensible, agreeable woman, not so elegant as her daughter, but very civil, courteous, and good-natured. We talked away about Mr. Crisp and Mrs. Gast like mad. I know no subject upon which I am more fluent; and so I suppose I seldom have, to a new acquaintance, appeared more loquacious. They were both too prudent to mention having seen my letters; but Miss Bowdler has given me intelligence which I shall not make the less use of.

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Is it not a shocking thing, my dear Susette, that I am obliged to write to you upon this decent paper? I never bring half enough riff-raff with me for the volumes I write to you, and yet it always goes to my heart to treat you so genteelly.

Well, to go back to that Saturday that passed an age ago, where I left off in my last.

Dr. Harrington and Miss Cooper dined here.

Dr. Harrington, I find, is descended in a right line from the celebrated Sir John Harrington, who was godson of Queen Elizabeth, and one of the gayest writers and flashers of her reign; and it is his son that is the Rev. Henry Harrington, who published those very curious, entertaining, and valuable remains of his ancestor under the title *Nugæ Antiquæ*, which my father and all of us were formerly so fond of.

We had much talk among us of Chatterton, and, as he was best known in this part of the world, I attended particularly to the opinion of Dr. Harrington concerning him; and the more particularly because he is uncommonly well-versed in the knowledge of English antiquities; therefore was I much surprised to find it his opinion that Chatterton was no impostor, and that the poems were authentic, and Rowley's. Much, indeed, he said they had been modernised in his copies; not by design, but from the difficulty which attended reading the old manuscript—a difficulty which the genius of Chatterton urged him not to confess but to redress. A book, however, is now publishing that is entirely to clear up this so-long-disputed and very mysterious affair, by Dr. Mills,[1] Dean of Exeter.

In the evening we had a great deal more company,—consisting of the Dean of Ossory, Mrs. and Miss Lewis, but not Charlotte Lewis, who is not well, Mrs. and Miss Bowdler, my pretty new acquaintance, Miss Leigh, and Mr. Jerningham.

Miss Leigh and I kept together very rigidly the whole evening, and talked a great deal of talk, and grew very intimate; but one time, when accidentally I took up a book from the table, merely to peep at the title-page, Mr. Jerningham approached me, and said, in a gentle style of raillery,

"Why do you take up a book, Miss Burney?—you know you can't read."

"Oh," answered I, in the same gentle style, "I only do it to make believe."

And you can't think how prettily he laughed. He inquired, however, a great deal after my father, and wonders he does not come down here.

Another time, he said to me, "Pray were not you the lady that used the glass the other night at the play?"[2]

Here I was quite shocked; but could only defend, not deny; protesting, with great truth, that I only used it for the performers, and could not see at all without it.

"A lady in the box with me," continued he, "wanted sadly to know which was you; so, indeed, did all the company I was with, and I fancy I pointed right—did not I point right?"

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[1] Jeremiah Milles, D.D., 1714-84, President of the Society of Antiquaries. His book on Chatterton was published in 1782.

[2] Miss Burney—it may be remembered—was very short-sighted.

Mrs. Bowdler, to keep up the character I have already given of her, once called out from the farthest end of the room, "Miss Burney, my daughter Harriet longs more and more to see you; she writes us word she hopes to come home in time, or she shall be prodigiously disappointed."

I had much discourse with the dean, all about the prospects, and the walks, and the country; he is extremely civil and well-bred.

Sunday.—This morning Miss Gregory came to accompany us to St. James's Church, to hear Dr. Porteus, Bishop of Chester,[1] preach a charity sermon for an excellent institution here, to enable the poor sick to drink the waters in an hospital. It was an admirable sermon, rational, judicious, forcible, and truth-breathing; and delivered with a clearness, stillness, grace, and propriety that softened and bettered us all—as, I believe, appeared by the collection, for I fancy not a soul left the church without offering a mite.

The evening we spent with old Mrs. C——, and divers other old gentlewomen assembled at her house. Immensely dull work, indeed!

Monday.—This morning we appointed for hearing Miss Guest play; and Miss L——, that good and odd old maid I have already mentioned, conducted us to her house; and was delighted beyond measure with a mixture of good-humour for us, and exultation for herself, that she had the credit of the introduction.

Miss Guest is very young, but far from handsome; she is, however, obliging, humble, unassuming, and pleasing. At her house, by appointment, we met the Dean of Ossory and Dr. Woodward.

She began with playing the third of Eichner, and I wish she had begun with something else, for I have so often heard our dear Etty in this, that I was quite spoiled for Miss Guest, or, I firmly believe, for anybody; because in Eichner, as in Bach of Berlin, Echard and Boccherini, Etty plays as if inspired, and in taste, expression, delicacy, and feeling, leaves nothing to wish. Miss Guest has a very strong hand, and is indeed a very fine player—so fine a one as to make me think of Etty while she plays, though always, and in all particulars, to this poor girl's disadvantage.

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[1] Beilby Porteus, 1731-1808, Bishop of Chester from 1776 to 1787.

She next played the second of Clementi, which seemed to want nothing but a strong hand, and therefore I was full as well content with the player as with the music, but not enchanted with either.

After this she sang, "Io che fedele," and here I thought I liked her better than in her playing. She has but little voice, but it is very sweet. Sacchini was her master, and, I fancy, must have taught her this very song, for she really sings it charmingly. Altogether I was so well pleased with her that I was quite sorry we could stay to hear nothing more. I am most greedily hungry for a little music, and have heard nothing at all approaching Miss Guest since I left town. She is to come hither to give lessons to Miss Thrale, and help keep up her singing, and so I shall probably often hear her.

In our way home we met Miss Gregory, who flew up to me, and taking my hand, cried,

"I have received in a letter I had this morning such an *éloge* of *Evelina*—such a description of you. 'Tis from Mrs. Chapone,[1] too, and I will show you next time we meet."

There's for you! who would not be a blue-stockinger at this rate?

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[1] Hester Chapone, *née* Mulso, 1727-1801, the friend of Richardson, and author of the once famous *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*, 1773.

We parted with Miss L—— upon the Parade, and came in to dress, and while I was yet engaged in this important occupation, Mrs. Thrale came laughing into my room to tell me Miss L—— had just been with her again, and told her she had just been with Mrs. Dobson, "And, dear, ma'am, there I heard all about Miss Burney! I was never so surprised. But I am going to the library immediately for the book; though I assure you I read it all when it first came out; but that was nothing like, not knowing anything of the matter; but Mrs. Dobson has let me into the secret, so I wanted to know if it's all true?"

Mrs. Thrale readily confirmed it.

"Well," cried she, "I shall run to the library, then, directly and fetch it; but to be sure I thought from the beginning that something was the matter, though I could not tell what, because, ma'am, I felt such a panic,—I assure you when I sung before Miss Burney I was never in such a panic in my life!"

Mrs. Dobson, I daresay, is not a new name to you; she has made an abridged translation of *Petrarch's Life*, and of the *History of the Troubadours*.[1] She has long been trying to make acquaintance with Mrs. Thrale, but Mrs. Thrale not liking her advances, has always shrunk from them; however, I find she has prevailed with Miss L—— to let her be one of her party when her visit is returned.

This evening we all went to Mrs. Cholmley's, in consequence of an elegant invitation from that very elegant lady, to meet Mrs. Montagu, who was there with Miss Gregory, Miss Poyntz, and a Mrs. Wilson.

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[1] Mrs. Susannah Dobson, *d.* 1795. Her translation (Johnson calls it an epitome) of the Abbé de Sade's *Mémoires pour la Vie de Pétrarque* had appeared in 1775; her *Literary History of the Troubadours*, a version of Curne de Sainte-Palaye, in 1779 (see *post*, p. 365).

We had a very cheerful and pleasant evening.

Tuesday.—This morning I went to the Belvidere to breakfast, by engagement, with Mrs. and Miss Leigh.

I like them more and more, and we talked about dear Chessington, and were quite comfortable, and I was so well pleased with my visit that I stayed with them almost all the morning.

In the evening we went to Mrs. Lambart, who is another of my favourites. I was very ready to like her for the sake of her brother, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke; and I find her so natural, so chatty, so prone to fun and ridicule, and so sociably agreeable, that I am highly pleased with her acquaintance.

This evening we had plenty of sport with her, of the ridiculous sort, which is quite her favourite style. She had nobody with her at first but a Miss Pleydell, a very unaffected and good-humoured girl, and therefore she produced for our entertainment a new tragedy, in manuscript, written by a Worcester clergyman, who is tutor to her son. [I will inquire his name some time, and perhaps Edward may know him.] This tragedy, it seems, Mr. Sheridan has read, and has promised to bring out next winter. It is called *Timoleon.*[1] It is mighty common trash, and written in very clumsy language, and many of the expressions afforded us much diversion by their mock grandeur, though not one affected, interested, or surprised us. But, it seems, when we complained of its length and want of incident, Mrs. Lambart told us that the author was aware of that, and said he knew there was no incident, but that he could not help it, for there was none that he could find in the history!

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[1] By George Butt, D.D., 1741-95, at this date Rector of Stanford and Vicar of Clifton. It had been submitted to Garrick in 1777. It was apparently never printed or acted (*Biographia Dramatica*, 1812, iii. 338).

Don't you admire the necessity he was under of making choice of a subject to which he knew such an objection?

I did not, however, hear above half the piece, though enough not to regret missing the rest, for Mr. E—— now made his appearance, and Mrs. Thrale read the rest to herself.

As you seem to have rather a taste for these "Witlings," I will give you another touch of this young divine. He soon found out what we were about, and presently said, "If that play is writ by the person I suspect, I am sure I have a good right to know some of it; for I was once in a house with him, and his study happened to be just over my head, and so there I used to hear him spouting by the hour together."

He spoke this in a tone of complaint that made us all laugh, with which facetiousness, however, he was so far from being disturbed, that he only added, in a voice of fretful plaintiveness,

"I'm sure I've cause enough to remember it, for he has kept me awake by the whole night together."

We were now not content with simpering, for we could not forbear downright laughing: at which he still looked most stupidly unmoved.

"Pray, Mrs. Lambart," said he, "what is its name?"

"*Timoleon*," answered she.

"Pray," said he, "is it an invention of his own, or an historical fact?"

[When we were coming away, Mrs. Lambart, taking the play from off the table, and bringing it to me, asked me, in a comical manner, to read it through, and try to find something to praise, that she might let the author know I had seen and approved of it. I laughed, but declined the task, for many reasons, and then Mr. E—— approaching me said, "Ma'am, if you were to read it with a little pencil in your hand, just to mark your favourite passages, and so forth, I should think it might be a very good thing, and—and of use." Of use?—ha, ha!]

Wednesday was a sort of grand day. We all dined and spent the evening at Mrs. K——'s. Our party was Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Poyntz, Miss Gregory, Miss Owen, Dr. Maningham, and Mr. Hunt.

The ladies you have heard of enough. Of the men, Dr. Maningham is very good-humoured, fat, and facetious. He asked me much after my dear father, whom he met with at Buxton, and after the Denoyers, with whom he seemed extremely intimate, and so, indeed, he was well inclined to be with me, for he shook me by the wrist twenty times in the course of the day. Mr. Hunt is a young man of very large independent fortune, very ugly, very priggish, a violent talker, and a *self-piquer* upon immense good breeding.

Miss Gregory and I kept together all the day, and did each of us very well. She told me that the Mrs. Wilson I met at Mrs. Cholmley's wanted to know me, and, if I should not think her "very impudent," would come up to speak to me the first time she saw me on the Parade. I condescended to send her a civil permission.

Mrs. K—— took the first opportunity that presented itself, to make me, in a low voice, abundance of civil speeches about *Evelina.* All the loud speeches were made by Mr. Hunt, who talked incessantly, and of nothing but dancing! Poor Mrs. Montagu looked tired to death, and could not get in a word;—it was really ridiculous to see how this coxcomb silenced her.

When everybody was gone, but ourselves and Miss Gregory, we Misses growing somewhat facetious in a corner, Mrs. K—— good-humouredly called out, "I'm sure, ladies, I am very glad to see you so merry. Ah,—one of you young ladies,—I don't say which—has given me a deal of entertainment! I'm sure I could never leave off reading; and when Miss Owen came into my room, says I, don't speak a word to me, for I'm so engaged!—I could not bear to be stopped—and then, Mrs. Thrale, I had such a prodigious desire to see her—for I said, says I, 'I'm sure she must have a good heart,—here's such fine sentiments,' says I.—Oh! it's a sweet book!"

"Ay, ma'am," said Mrs. Thrale; "and we that know her, like her yet better than her book."

"Well, ma'am," answered she, "and I that know the book best,—to be sure I like that."

"Then, ma'am, you show your taste; and I my judgment."

"And what must I show?" cried I—"my back, I believe, and run away, if you go on so!"

Here, then, it stopped; but when I was taking leave Mrs. K—— repeated her praises, and added,

"I'm sure, ma'am, you must have a very happy way of thinking; and then there's Mrs. Duval,—such a natural character!"

Thursday.—We were appointed to meet the Bishop of Chester[1] at Mrs. Montagu's. This proved a very gloomy kind of grandeur; the Bishop waited for Mrs. Thrale to speak, Mrs. Thrale for the Bishop; so neither of them spoke at all!

Mrs. Montagu cared not a fig, as long as she spoke herself, and so she harangued away. Meanwhile Mr. Melmoth, the Pliny Melmoth,[2] as he is called, was of the party, and seemed to think nobody half so great as himself, and, therefore, chose to play first-violin without further ceremony. But, altogether, the evening was not what it was intended to be, and I fancy nobody was satisfied. It is always thus in long-projected meetings.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 358.

[2] William Melmoth the younger, 1710-99. His translation of Pliny's *Letters* had appeared as far back as 1746. Like Anstey, he resided in Bath, living there forty years at 12 Bladud Buildings. He was buried at Batheaston, and has a tablet in the Abbey Church.

The Bishop, however, seems to be a very elegant man: Mrs. Porteus, his lady, is a very sensible and well-bred woman: he had also a sister with him, who sat quite mum all the night, and looked prodigiously weary.

Mr. Melmoth seems intolerably self-sufficient—appears to look upon himself as the first man in Bath, and has a proud conceit in look and manner, mighty forbidding. His lady is in nothing like the Bishop's; I am sure I should pity her if she were.

The good Miss Cooper was of the party, and a Mrs. Forster. I, as usual, had my friend Greg, at my elbow. If I had not now taken to her, I should absolutely run wild!

Friday was a busy and comical day. We had an engagement of long standing, to drink tea with Miss L——, whither we all went, and a most queer evening did we spend.

When we entered, she and all her company were looking out of the window; however, she found us out in a few minutes, and made us welcome in a strain of delight and humbleness at receiving us, that put her into a flutter of spirits, from which she never recovered all the evening.

Her fat, jolly mother took her seat at the top of the room; next to her sat a lady in a riding habit, whom I soon found to be Mrs. Dobson; below her sat a gentlewoman, prim, upright, neat, and mean; and, next to her, sat another, thin, hagged,[1] wrinkled, fine, and tawdry, with a thousand frippery ornaments and old-fashioned furbelows; she was excellently nicknamed, by Mrs. Thrale, the Duchess of

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[1] Haggard.

Monmouth. On the opposite side was placed Mrs. Thrale, and, next to her, Queeny. For my own part, little liking the appearance of the set, and half-dreading Mrs. Dobson, from whose notice I wished to escape, I had made up myself to one of the now deserted windows, and Mr. Thrale had followed me. As to Miss L——, she came to stand by me, and her panic, I fancy, returned, for she seemed quite panting with a desire to say something, and an incapacity to utter it.

It proved happy for me that I had taken this place, for in a few minutes the mean, neat woman, whose name was Aubrey, asked if Miss Thrale was Miss Thrale?

"Yes, ma'am."

"And pray, ma'am, who is that other young lady?"

"A daughter of Dr. Burney's, ma'am."

"What!" cried Mrs. Dobson, "is that the lady that has favoured us with that excellent novel?"

"Yes, ma'am."

Then burst forth a whole volley from all at once. "Very extraordinary, indeed!" said one—"Dear heart, who'd have thought it?" said another—"I never saw the like in my life!" said a third. And Mrs. Dobson, entering more into detail, began praising it through, but chiefly Evelina herself, which she said was the most natural character she had ever met in any book.

Meantime, I had almost thrown myself out of the window, in my eagerness to get out of the way of this gross and noisy applause; but poor Miss L——, having stood quite silent a long time, simpering, and nodding her assent to what was said, at last broke forth with,

"I assure you, ma'am, we've been all quite delighted: that is, we had read it before, but only now upon reading it again——"

I thanked her, and talked of something else, and she took the hint to have done; but said,

"Pray, ma'am, will you favour me with your opinion of Mrs. Dobson's works?"

A pretty question, in a room so small that even a whisper would be heard from one end to another! However, I truly said I had not read them.

Mr. and Mrs. Whalley now arrived, and I was obliged to go to a chair—when such staring followed; they could not have opened their eyes wider when they first looked at the Guildhall giants! I looked with all the gravity and demureness possible, in order to keep them from coming plump to the subject again, and, indeed, this, for a while, kept them off.

Soon after, Dr. Harrington arrived, which closed our party. Miss L—— went whispering to him, and then came up to me, with a look of dismay, and said,

"Oh, ma'am, I'm so prodigiously concerned; Mr. Henry won't come!"

"Who, ma'am?"

"Mr. Henry, ma'am, the doctor's son.[1] But, to be sure, he does not know you are here, or else —but I'm quite concerned, indeed, for here now we shall have no young gentlemen!"

"Oh, all the better," cried I. "I hope we shall be able to do very well without."

"Oh yes, ma'am, to be sure. I don't mean for any common young gentlemen; but Mr. Henry, ma'am, it's quite another thing;—however, I think he might have come; but I did not happen to mention in my card that you were to be here, and so—but I think it serves him right for not coming to see me."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 356. The Rev. Henry Harington, 1755-91, compiler, from the Harington papers, of the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, a second edition of which had recently appeared.

Soon after the mamma hobbled to me, and began a furious panegyric upon my book, saying, at the same time,

"I wonder, Miss, how you could get at them low characters. As to the lords and ladies, that's no wonder at all; but, as to t'others, why, I have not stirred, night nor morning, while I've been reading it: if I don't wonder how you could be so clever!"

And much, much more. And, scarcely had she unburthened herself, ere Miss L—— trotted back to me, crying, in a tone of mingled triumph and vexation,

"Well, ma'am, Mr. Henry will be very much mortified when he knows who has been here; that he will, indeed: however, I'm sure he deserves it!"

I made some common sort of reply, that I hoped he was better engaged, which she vehemently declared was impossible.

We had now some music. [Miss L—— sung various old elegies of Jackson, Dr. Harrington, and Linley, and oh how I dismalled in hearing them! Mr. Whalley, too, sung "Robin Gray," and divers other melancholic ballads, and Miss Thrale sang "Ti seguire fedele."]

But the first time there was a cessation of harmony, Miss L——, again respectfully approaching me, cried,

"Well, all my comfort is that Mr. Henry will be prodigiously mortified! But there's a ball to-night, so I suppose he's gone to that. However, I'm sure if he had known of meeting you young ladies here—but it's all good enough for him, for not coming!"

"Nay," cried I, "if meeting young ladies is a motive with him, he can have nothing to regret while at a ball, where he will see many more than he could here."

"Oh, ma'am, as to that—but I say no more, because it mayn't be proper; but, to be sure, if Mr. Henry had known—however, he'll be well mortified!"

Soon after this, a chair next mine being vacated, Mrs. Dobson came and seated herself in it, to my somewhat dismay, as I knew what would follow. Plump she came upon her subject, saying,

"Miss Burney, I am come to thank you for the vast entertainment you have given me. I am quite happy to see you; I wished to see you very much. It's a charming book, indeed; the characters are vastly well supported!"

In short, she ran on for half-an-hour, I believe, in nothing but plain, unadorned, downright praise; while I could only bow, and say she was very good, and long to walk out of the room.

When she had run herself out of breath, and exhausted her store of compliments, she began telling me of her own affairs; talked, without any introduction or leading speeches, of her translations, and took occasion to acquaint me she had made £400 of her *Petrarca*. She then added some other anecdotes, which I have not time to mention, and then said,

"Miss Burney, I shall be very happy to wait upon you and Mrs. Thrale. I have longed to know Mrs. Thrale these many years: pray, do you think I may wait upon you both on Sunday morning?"

"To be sure, we shall be very happy."

"Well, then, if you don't think it will be an intrusion—but will you be so good as to mention it to Mrs. Thrale?"

I was obliged to say "Yes," and soon after she quitted me to go and give another dose of flummery to Mrs. Thrale.

I was not two minutes relieved, ere Miss L—— returned, to again assure me how glad she was that

Mr. Henry would be mortified. The poor lady was quite heartbroken that we did not meet.

The next vacation of my neighbouring chair was filled by Mrs. L——, who brought me some flowers; and when I thanked her, said,

"Oh, miss, you deserve everything! You've writ the best and prettiest book. That lord there—I forget his name, that marries her at last—what a fine gentleman he is! You deserve everything for drawing such a character; and then Miss Elena, there, Miss Belmont, as she is at last—what a noble couple of 'em you have put together! As to that t'other lord, I was glad he had not her, for I see he had nothing but a bad design."

Well, have you enough of this ridiculous evening? Mrs. Thrale and I have mutually agreed that we neither of us ever before had so complete a dish of gross flattery as this night. Yet let me be fair, and tell you that this Mrs. Dobson, though coarse, low-bred, forward, self-sufficient, and flaunting, seems to have a strong and masculine understanding, and parts that, had they been united with modesty, or fostered by education, might have made her a shining and agreeable woman; but she has evidently kept low company, which she has risen above in literature, but not in manners. She obtained Mrs. Thrale's leave to come on Sunday, and to bring with her a grand-daughter of Mr. Richardson's, who, she said, was dying to see Mrs. T. and Miss B., and who Mr. Whalley said had all the elegance and beauty which her grandfather had described in Clarissa or Clementina.

Sunday.—Mrs. Dobson called, and brought with her Miss Ditcher[1]—a most unfortunate name for a descendant of Richardson! However, Mr. Whalley had not much exaggerated, for she is, indeed, quite beautiful, both in face and figure. All her features are very fine; she is tall, looks extremely modest, and has just sufficient consciousness of her attractions to keep off bashfulness, without enough to raise conceit. I think I could take to her very much, but shall not be likely to see her again.

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[1] Daughter of Mary, or "Polly" Richardson, eldest daughter of the novelist, and Mr. Philip Ditcher, a Bath surgeon.

Bath, May 28.—I was very happy, my dearest girls, with the account of your safe return from the borough. I never mentioned your having both accompanied me till I had got half way to Bath; for I found my dear Mrs. Thrale so involved in business, electioneering, canvassing, and letter-writing, that after our first *embrassades*, we hardly exchanged a word till we got into the chaise next morning.

Dr. Johnson, however, who was with her, received me even joyfully; and, making me sit by him, began a gay and spirited conversation, which he kept up till we parted, though in the midst of all this bustle.

The next morning we rose at four o'clock, and when we came downstairs, to our great surprise, found Dr. Johnson waiting to receive and breakfast with us; though the night before he had taken leave of us, and given me the most cordial and warm assurances of the love he has for me, which I do indeed believe to be as sincere as I can wish; and I failed not to tell him the affectionate respect with which I return it; though, as well as I remember, we never came to this open declaration before.

We, therefore, drank our coffee with him, and then he handed us both into the chaise. He meant to have followed us to Bath, but Mrs. Thrale discouraged him, from a firm persuasion that he would be soon very horribly wearied of a Bath life: an opinion in which I heartily join.

When at last I told Mrs. T. of your adventure of accompanying me to the borough, she scolded me for not bringing you both in; but, as I told her, I am sure you would have been very uncomfortable in a visit so ill-timed. However, she said she hoped she should see you both there when again settled for winter, and make amends for so inhospitable a beginning.

Adventures in our journey we had no time to think of; we flew along as swift as possible, but stopped to change horses at Devizes in preference to Chippenham, merely to inquire after the fair and very ingenious family of the Lawrences; but we only saw the mother and elder son.[1]

We found our dear master charmingly well, and very glad indeed to see us. Miss Cooper, who was with them, and who is made up of quick sensations, manifested the most pleasure of all the party. We have agreed to visit comfortably in town. She is by no means either bright or entertaining, but she is so infinitely good, so charitable to the poor, so kind to the sick, so zealous for the distressed, and in every part of her conduct so blameless where quiet, and so praiseworthy where active, that I am really proud of the kindness she seems to have taken for me, and shall cultivate it with the truest satisfaction.

The next morning we had visitors pouring in to see us after our journey; but the two whose eagerness was infinitely most sincere, were the Bishop of Peterborough,[2] who adores, and is adored in return by Mrs. Thrale, and the fair Augusta Byron, my romantically-partial young friend.

In the evening we all went to the Dean of Ossory's. I felt horribly fagged; but Mrs. Thrale was so gay and so well, in spite of all her fatigues, that I had not courage to complain and desire to be excused joining the party.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 325. The future Sir Thomas was the youngest child.

[2] John Hinchcliffe, 1731-94, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Bishop of Peterborough from 1769 to his death. He had been head master of Westminster School.

There was a great deal of company: among them Mrs. and Miss F. Bowdler, who again spoke very kindly of my mother; but of that I shall write to herself; and Mrs. Lambart, and Mr. Anstey, and the Bishop of Peterborough; besides others not worth naming.

The bishop, in conversation, is indeed a most shining and superior man,—gay, high-spirited, manly, quick, and penetrating. I was seated, however, between the two Miss L——'s, and heard but little conversation besides their's and my own,—and which of the three afforded me most delight I have now no time to investigate.

Mr. Anstey opens rather more, and approaches nearer to being rather agreeable. If he could but forget he had written the *Bath Guide*, with how much more pleasure would everybody else remember it.

Sunday.—We went to the abbey, to hear the bishop preach. He gave us a very excellent sermon, upon the right use of seeking knowledge, namely, to know better the Creator by his works, and to learn our own duty in studying his power.

Mrs. Montagu we miss cruelly, and Miss Gregory I think of everywhere I go, as she used to be my constant elbow companion, and most smiling greeter. Mrs. Montagu has honoured me, in a letter to Mrs. T., with this line: "Give my love to the truly lovely Miss Burney!" I fancy she meant lovable; but be that as it may, I am sure she meant no harm, and therefore I shall take her blindness in good part.

Monday.—We went to Mrs. Lambart. Here we met Lady Dorothy Inglish, a Scotchwoman; Sir Robert Pigot, an old Englishman; Mrs. North, the Bishop of Worcester's handsome wife, and many nameless others.

Mrs. North, who is so famed for tonishness, exhibited herself in a more perfect undress than I ever before saw any lady, great or small, appear in upon a visit. Anything alike worse as better than other folks, that does but obtain notice and excite remark, is sufficient to make happy ladies and gentlemen of the *ton*. I always long to treat them as daddy Crisp does bad players (when his own partners) at whist, and call to them, with a nod of contemptuous anger, "Bless you! bless you!"

I had no talk but with Mrs. Lambart herself, who now, Mrs. Byron excepted, is far the most agreeable woman in Bath—I mean among the women mistresses—for among the women misses of the very first class, I reckon Miss F. Bowdler.

Tuesday.—The bishop and Mrs. Lambart dined with us, and stayed the afternoon, which was far more agreeable, lively, and sociable than when we have more people. I believe I told you that, before I last left Bath the bishop read to Mrs. T. and me a poem upon Hope, of the Duchess of Devonshire's, obtained with great difficulty from Lady Spencer.[1] Well, this day he brought a tale called *Anxiety*, which he had almost torn from Lady Spencer, who is still here, to show to Mrs. Thrale; and, as before, he extended his confidence to me. It is a very pretty tale, and has in it as much entertainment as any tale upon so hackneyed a subject as an assembly of all the gods and goddesses to bestow their gifts upon mankind, can be expected to give.

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[1] Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, 1757-1806, is not included in Walpole and Park's *Royal and Noble Authors*. The former speaks, however (*Corr.* vi. 217), of the *Ode to Hope* with faint praise. Mason answered it. A poem on the *Passage of the Mountain of St. Gothard* was published by the Duchess in 1802, and was translated into French, German, and Italian. She was also credited with the *Sylph* (p. 418).

Lord Mulgrave called this morning. He is returned to Bath for only a few days. He was not in his usual spirits; yet he failed not to give me a rub for my old offence, which he seems determined not to forget; for upon something being said, to which, however, I had not attended, about seamen, he cast an arch glance at me, and cried out,

"Oh, Miss Burney, I know, will take our parts—if I remember right, she is one of the greatest of our enemies!"

"All the sea captains," said Mrs. Thrale, "fall upon Miss Burney: Captain Cotton, my cousin,[1] was for ever plaguing her about her spite to the navy."

This, however, was for the character of Captain Mirvan, which, in a comical and good-humoured way, Captain Cotton pretended highly to resent, and so, he told me, did all the captains in the navy.[2]

Augusta Byron, too, tells me that the Admiral, her father, very often talks of Captain Mirvan, and though the book is very high in his favour, is not half pleased with the Captain's being such a brute.

However, I have this to comfort me,—that the more I see of sea captains, the less reason I have to be ashamed of Captain Mirvan; for they have all so irresistible a propensity to wanton mischief, to roasting beaus, and detesting old women, that I quite rejoice I showed the book to no one ere printed, lest I should have been prevailed upon to soften his character.

Some time after, while Lord Mulgrave was talking of Captain G. Byron's marrying a girl at

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[1] Mrs. Thrale's mother's maiden name was Cotton.

[2] This, as we have seen, was also the opinion of the *Monthly Review* (see *ante*, p. 28).

Barbadoes,[1] whom he had not known a week, he turned suddenly to me, and called out,

"See, Miss Burney, what you have to expect;—your brother will bring a bride from Kamschatka, without doubt!"

"That," said I, "may perhaps be as well as a Hottentot, for when he was last out, he threatened us with a sister from the Cape of Good Hope."

In the evening we went to see the *Merchant of Venice*, and Augusta was of our party. My favourite Mr. Lee played Shylock, and played it incomparably. With the rest of the performers I was not too much charmed.

Thursday.—Lord Mulgrave and Dr. Harrington dined here. Lord Mulgrave was delightful;—his wit is of so gay, so forcible, so splendid a kind that when he is disposed to exert it, he not only engrosses attention from all the rest of the company, but demands the full use of all one's faculties to keep pace in understanding the speeches, allusions, and sarcasms which he sports. But he will never, I believe, be tired of attacking me about the sea; "he will make me 'eat that leek,' I assure you!"

During dinner, he was speaking very highly of a sea officer whose name, I think, was Reynolds.

"And who is he?" asked Mrs. Thrale; to which his Lordship answered, "Brother to Lord—something, but I forget what"; and then, laughing and looking at me, he added, "We have all the great families in the navy,—ay, and all the best families, too,—have we not, Miss Burney? The sea is so favourable an element to genius, that there all high-souled younger brothers with empty pockets are sure of thriving: nay, I can say even more for it, for it not only fosters the talents of the spirited younger brothers, it also lightens the dulness even of that poor animal,—an elder brother; so that it is always the most desirable place both for best and worst."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 347.

"Well, your Lordship is always ready to praise it," said Mrs. Thrale; "and I only wish we had a few more like you in the service,—and long may you live, both to defend and to ornament it!"

"Defence," answered he with quickness, "it does not want,—and, for ornament, it is above all!"

In the evening we had more company,—the Bishop of Peterborough, Mr. Anstey, Dean of Ossory, Mrs. and Charlotte Lewis, F. Bowdler, and Miss Philips,—a lady with whom the beginning of my acquaintance was by a very strange mistake.

I forget if I ever mentioned to you that Miss Gregory long since told me that a Mrs. Wilson, whom I had seen at Mrs. Cholmley's, wished to know me, and sent me word she should accost me some day when I was walking on the Parade, if I should not think her very impudent for her pains. Well, divers messages, in consequence of this, passed between us; and, some time after, as I was sauntering upon the Parade with Mr. Thrale, a lady came out of the house in which I knew Mrs. Wilson resided, and with a smiling face, and a curtsey, made up to us. I took it for granted this was my destined acquaintance, whose face, as I was never near to her, I was too near-sighted to mark. I readily returned her civility, and myself began a conversation with her, of the weather, walks, and so forth, but we were both of us abominably embarrassed, and parted rather abruptly; and while Mr. Thrale and I were laughing at the encounter, we saw this lady join Mrs. Thrale, and presently we all met again. "And so," cried Mrs. Thrale to her husband, "you did not know Miss Philips? she says she made up to you, and you never spoke to her!" I now found my mistake, and that she neither was Mrs. Wilson, nor had intended addressing me. I was, therefore, quite ashamed of my own part in the affair, and obliged to clear it up with all speed.

Miss Philips, however, who is a Welsh lady, and sister to Lady Milford, has been pleased to make me her acquaintance ever since. Two days after, she called, and finding me at home, and alone, sat with me a full hour, and talked away very sociably and unreservedly. She presses me to visit and take morning walks with her; but the truth is, though she is sensible and sprightly, she is not much to my taste, and, therefore, I have evaded availing myself of her civility as much as has been in my power.

Charlotte Lewis, who is a mighty gay, giddy, pretty girl, and says whatever comes uppermost, told me she had heard a very bad account of me the night before at an assembly.

"A gentleman told me," she continued, "that you and Mrs. Thrale did nothing but criticise the play and the players at the *Merchant of Venice* the whole night."

For the play, I believe it might defy us; but for the players, I confess the case, and am by no means happy in having been so remarked, for Charlotte Lewis declared she had heard the same account since from another gentleman, and from three ladies, though there was not a face in the boxes I ever recollected having seen before; but Bath is as tittle-tattle a town as Lynn; and people make as many reports, and spread as many idle nothings abroad, as in any common little town in the kingdom.

Friday.—In the morning, I waited upon Miss Cooper, to return her a letter which she had sent me to peruse, from Mr. Bruce[1] to Mr. H. Seaton.

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[1] James Bruce of Kinnaird, 1730-94, the Abyssinian traveller. His Travels came out in 1790. He was a frequent visitor to No. 1 St. Martin's Street.

It was in his own handwriting, and contained a curious account of his making a friendship with an Arab, through the means of being known to a Mr. Hamilton, by whom this Arab had been kindly treated when a prisoner in Italy: and, through the friendship of this man, he enabled himself to pass on quietly to various places forbidden to strangers, and to make several of his best drawings, of ruins shown him by this Arab.

Saturday.—According to appointment, I went to breakfast at the Bowdlers'. I found all the Bowdlers, and Miss Leigh.

Harriet Bowdler is much younger than any of her sisters, but less handsome; she is sprightly, good-humoured, and agreeable. I was introduced to her very quietly by her sister, but soon after, Mrs. Bowdler finding some fault with the manner in which she had pinned her ribbons, applied to me about them. I sided, however, with Harriet, whose method I preferred.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Bowdler, "there spoke the Evelina—you like that way best because it is whimsical! Well, I like a little whim, too; but Harriet—oh, she is such an admirer of *Evelina*!"

Harriet modestly hung her head; Fanny, sensibly, frowned; and so, to my great ease, the matter went no further. But Mrs. Bowdler has long been dying to come to the point.

The very amiable Miss Leigh, with whom indeed I am greatly pleased, told me she had a favour to request of me, which I gladly promised to perform *d'avance.*

"I have a relation here," said she, "Captain Frodsham, who was made captain by Admiral Byron, to whom he is under very great obligations. Now he has heard that Mrs. Byron is quite incensed with him for not having waited upon her; but as he did not know her, he stayed away merely from fearing she would think a visit from him impertinent. Now if you will be so good as to pave the way for his reception, and make his apologies, he will be greatly obliged to you, and so shall I."

This I most readily undertook: and having stayed prating with them all till twelve o'clock, I broke away, after a very agreeable breakfast, and went to Mrs. Cholmley.

I found her at home and quite alone, and I stayed with her the rest of the morning. I have never yet been near so well pleased with her. She is much better in a *tête-à-tête* than in a mixed company. Her gentleness, good sense, and the delicacy of her mind, all show to advantage in close and intimate conversation; but in a room full of company, they are buried in the tumult of general talk and mere flashy brilliancy. I found her now "soft without insipidity," as my dear father said she was, and every way worthy her own most sweet *padre*. Not, however, quite, neither, for I am still far from believing her talents equal to his. But she is a sweet woman, and I was very happy in being earnestly pressed by her to visit her in town.

In the afternoon we all went to the Whalleys', where we found a large and a highly-dressed company: at the head of which sat Lady Miller.[1] Among the rest were Mr. Anstey, his lady, and two daughters, Miss Weston, Mrs. Aubrey, the thin quaker-like woman I saw first at Mrs. Lawes', Mrs. Lambart, and various others, male and female, that I knew not.

Miss Weston instantly made up to me, to express her "delight" at my return to Bath, and to beg she might sit by me. Mrs. Whalley, however, placed me upon a sofa between herself and Mrs. Aubrey; which, however, I did not repine at, for the extreme delicacy of Miss Weston makes it prodigiously fatiguing to converse with her, as it is no little difficulty to keep pace with her refinement, in order to avoid shocking her by too obvious an inferiority in daintihood and *ton.*

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[1] Anna, Lady Miller, *née* Riggs, 1741-81, of the Batheaston vase (see *post*, p. 415). Her husband, John Miller of Ballicasey, had been created a baronet in 1778.

Mr. Whalley, to my great astonishment, so far broke through his delicacy as to call to me across the room, to ask me divers questions concerning my London journey; during all which, Mr. Anstey, who sat next to him, earnestly fixed his eyes in my face, and both then and for the rest of the evening, examined me with a look of most keen penetration.

As soon as my discourse was over with Mr. Whalley (during which, as he called me by my name, everybody turned towards me, which was not very agreeable), Lady Miller arose, and went to Mrs. Thrale, and whispered something to her. Mrs. Thrale then rose, too, and said,

"If your ladyship will give me leave, I will first introduce my daughter to you" — making Miss Thrale, who was next her mother, make her reverences.

"And now," she continued, "Miss Burney, Lady Miller desires to be introduced to you."

Up I jumped and walked forward; Lady Miller, very civilly more than met me half-way, and said very polite things, of her wish to know me, and regret that she had not sooner met me, and then we both returned to our seats.

Do you know now that, notwithstanding Bath Easton is so much laughed at in London, nothing here is more tonish than to visit Lady Miller, who is extremely curious[1] in her company, admitting few people who are not of rank or of fame, and excluding of those all who are not people of character very unblemished.

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[1] *i.e.* select, particular.

Some time after, Lady Miller took a seat next mine on the sofa, to play at cards, and was excessively civil indeed—scolded Mrs. Thrale for not sooner making us acquainted, and had the politeness to offer to take me to the balls herself, as she heard Mr. and Mrs. Thrale did not choose to go.

After all this, it is hardly fair to tell you what I think of her. However, the truth is, I always, to the best of my intentions, speak honestly what I think of the folks I see, without being biassed either by their civilities or neglect; and that you will allow is being a very faithful historian.

Well, then, Lady Miller is a round, plump, coarse-looking dame of about forty, and while all her aim is to appear an elegant woman of fashion, all her success is to seem an ordinary woman in very common life, with fine clothes on. Her manners are bustling, her air is mock-important, and her manners very inelegant.

So much for the lady of Bath Easton; who, however, seems extremely good-natured, and who is I am sure extremely civil.

The card-party was soon after broken up, as Lady Miller was engaged to Lady Dorothy Inglish, and then I moved to seat myself by Mrs. Lambart.

I was presently followed by Miss Weston, and she was pursued by Mr. Bouchier, a man of fortune who is in the army or the militia, and who was tormenting Miss Weston, *en badinage*, about some expedition upon the river Avon, to which he had been witness. He seemed a mighty rattling, harem-scarem gentleman, but talked so fluently that I had no trouble in contributing my mite towards keeping up the conversation, as he talked enough for four; and this I was prodigiously pleased at, as I was in an indolent mood, and not disposed to bear my share. I fancy, when he pleases, and thinks it worth while, he can be sensible and agreeable, but all his desire then, was to alarm Miss Weston, and persuade the company she had been guilty of a thousand misdemeanours.

In the midst of this rattle, Mr. Whalley proposed that Miss Thrale should go downstairs to hear a Miss Sage play upon the harpsichord. Miss Sage is a niece of Mrs. Whalley, and about nine years old. I offered to be of the party. Miss Weston joined us, as did the Miss Ansteys, and down we went.

And terribly wearied was I! she played a lesson of Giordani's that seemed to have no end, and repeated all the parts into the bargain; and this, with various little English songs, detained us till we were summoned to the carriage. I had an opportunity, however, of seeing something of the Miss Ansteys.

Mr. Anstey, I cannot doubt, must sometimes be very agreeable; he could not else have written so excellent, so diverting, so original a satire.[1] But he chooses to keep his talents to himself, or only to exert them upon very particular occasions. Yet what he can call particular I know not, for I have seen him with Mrs. Montagu, with Mrs. Thrale, with the Bishop of Peterborough, and with Lord Mulgrave; and four more celebrated folks for their abilities can hardly be found. Yet, before them all he has been the same as when I have seen him without any of them—shyly important, and silently proud!

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[1] Miss Burney makes Lord Orville and Evelina read this book together at Mrs. Beaumont's. It could scarcely be chosen as a manual for a hero and heroine now.

Well, and there are men who are to be and to make happy, and there are men who are neither to make nor be made so!

Ah, how different and how superior our sweet father! who never thinks of his authorship and fame at all, but who is respected for both by everybody for claiming no respect from anybody; and so, Heaven be praised, Dr. Burney and not Mr. Anstey gave birth to my Susan and to her F. B.

Bath, June 4.—To go on with Saturday evening.

We left the Whalleys at nine, and then proceeded to Sir J. C——, who had invited us to a concert at his house.

We found such a crowd of chairs and carriages we could hardly make our way. I had never seen any of the family, consisting of Sir J. and three daughters, but had been particularly invited. The two rooms for the company were quite full when we arrived, and a large party was standing upon the first-floor landing-place. Just as I got upstairs, I was much surprised to hear my name called by a man's voice who stood in the crowd upon the landing-place, and who said,

"Miss Burney, better go up another flight (pointing upstairs)—if you'll take my advice, you'll go up another flight, for there's no room anywhere else."

I then recollected the voice, for I could not see the face, of Lord Mulgrave, and I began at first to suppose I must really do as he said, for there seemed not room for a sparrow, and I have heard the Sharp family do actually send their company all over their house when they give concerts. However, by degrees we squeezed ourselves into the outer room, and then Mrs. Lambart made way up to me, to introduce me to Miss C——, who is extremely handsome, genteel, and pleasing, though tonish, and who did the honours, in spite of the crowd, in a manner to satisfy everybody. After that, she herself introduced me to her next sister, Arabella, who is very fat, but not ugly. As to Sir J., he was seated behind a door in the music-room, where, being lame, he was obliged to keep still, and I never once saw his face, though I was upon the point of falling over him; for, at one time, as I had squeezed just into the music-room, and was leaning against the door, which was open, and which Lord Althorpe, the Duchess of Devonshire's brother, was also lolling against, the pressure pushed Sir James's chair, and the door beginning to move, I thought we should have fallen backwards. Lord Althorpe moved off instantly, and I started forwards without making any disturbance, and then Mr. Travell came to assure me all was safe behind the door, and so the matter rested quietly, though not without giving me a ridiculous fright.

Mr. Travell, ma'am, if I have not yet introduced him to you, I must tell you is known throughout Bath by the name of Beau Travell; he is a most approved connoisseur in beauty, gives the *ton* to all the world, sets up young ladies in the *beau monde*, and is the sovereign arbitrator of fashions, and decider of fashionable people. I had never the honour of being addressed by him before, though I have met him at the dean's and at Mrs. Lambart's. So you may believe I was properly struck.

Though the rooms were so crowded, I saw but two faces I knew—Lord Huntingdon, whom I have drunk tea with at Mrs. Cholmley's, and Miss Philips; but the rest were all showy tonish people, who are only to be seen by going to the rooms, which we never do. .

Some time after Lord Mulgrave crowded in among us, and cried out to me,

"So you would not take my advice!"

I told him he had really alarmed me, for I had taken him seriously.

He laughed at the notion of sending me up to the garrets, and then poked himself into the concert-room.

Oh, but I forgot to mention Dr. Harrington, with whom I had much conversation, and who was dry, comical, and very agreeable. I also saw Mr. Henry, but as Miss L—— was not present, nothing ensued.[1]

Miss C—— herself brought me a cup of ice, the room being so crowded that the man could not get near me. How ridiculous to invite so many more people than could be accommodated!

Lord Mulgrave was soon sick of the heat, and finding me distressed what to do with my cup, he very good-naturedly took it from me, but carried not only that, but himself also, away, which I did not equally rejoice at.

You may laugh, perhaps, that I have all this time said never a word of the music, but the truth is I heard scarce a note. There were quartettos and overtures by gentlemen performers whose names and faces I know not, and such was the never-ceasing tattling and noise in the card-room, where I was kept almost all the evening, that a general humming of musical sounds, and now and then a twang, was all I could hear.

Nothing can well be more ridiculous than a concert of this sort; and Dr. Harrington told me that the confusion amongst the musicians was equal to that amongst the company; for that, when called upon to open the concert, they found no music. The Miss C——'s had prepared nothing, nor yet solicited their *dilettanti* to prepare for them. Miss Harrington, his daughter, who played upon the harpsichord, and by the very little I could sometimes hear, I believe very well, complained that she had never touched so vile an instrument, and that she was quite disturbed at being obliged to play upon it.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 367.

About the time that I got against the door, as I have mentioned, of the music-room, the young ladies were preparing to perform, and with the assistance of Mr. Henry, they sang catches. Oh, such singing! worse squalling, more out of tune, and more execrable in every respect, never did I hear. We did not get away till late.

Sunday.—We had an excellent sermon from the Bishop of Peterborough, who preached merely at the request of Mrs. Thrale. From the abbey we went to the pump-room, where we met Mrs. and Miss Byron, and I gave Captain Frodsham's message, or rather apologies, to Mrs. Byron, who in her warm and rapid way told me she thought it extremely ill-bred that he had not waited upon her, but consented to receive him if he thought proper to come, and I undertook to let him know the same through Miss Leigh.

At the pump-room we also saw the beautiful Miss Ditcher, Richardson's grand-daughter,[1] Mr. Whalley, etc. But what gave me most pleasure was meeting with Miss Cooper, and hearing from her that Mrs. Carter was come to Bath, though only for that very day, in her way somewhere farther. I have long languished to see Mrs. Carter, and I entreated Miss Cooper to present me to her, which she most readily undertook to do, and said we should meet her upon the parade. Miss F. Bowdler joined us, and we all walked away in search of her, but to no purpose; Mrs.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 370.

Thrale, therefore, accompanied Miss Cooper to York House, where she was to repose that night, purposely to invite her to spend the evening with us.

[She could not, however, make her promise, but brought us some hopes.]

At dinner we had the Bishop and Dr. Harrington; and the bishop, who was in very high spirits, proposed a frolic, which was, that we should all go to Spring Gardens,[1] where he should give us tea, and thence proceed to Mr. Ferry's, to see a very curious house and garden. Mrs. Thrale pleaded that she had invited company to tea at home, but the bishop said we would go early, and should return in time, and was so gaily authoritative that he gained his point. He had been so long accustomed to command, when master of Westminster school, that he cannot prevail with himself, I believe, ever to be overcome.

Dr. Harrington was engaged to a patient, and could not be of our party. But the three Thrales, the bishop, and I, pursued our scheme, crossed the Avon, had a sweet walk through the meadows, and drank tea at Spring Gardens, where the bishop did the honours with a spirit, a gaiety, and an activity that jovialised us all, and really we were prodigiously lively. We then walked on to Mr. Ferry's habitation.

Mr. Ferry is a Bath alderman; his house and garden exhibit the house and garden of Mr. Tattersall,[2] enlarged. Just the same taste prevails, the same paltry ornaments, the same crowd of buildings, the same unmeaning decorations, and the same unsuccessful attempts at making something of nothing.

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[1] These gardens, on the left bank of the Avon, "opposite the Monks' Mill," were much used for the public entertainments which were part of the Bath programme. Letter xiii. of Anstey's *New Bath Guide* is devoted to a musical breakfast at the Spring Gardens.

[2] See *ante*, p. 66.

They kept us half an hour in the garden, while they were preparing for our reception in the house, where after parading through four or five little vulgarly showy closets, not rooms, we were conducted into a very gaudy little apartment, where the master of the house sat reclining on his arm, as if in contemplation, though everything conspired to show that the house and its inhabitants were carefully arranged for our reception. The bishop had sent in his name by way of gaining admission.

The bishop, with a gravity of demeanour difficult to himself to sustain, apologised for our intrusion, and returned thanks for seeing the house and garden. Mr. Ferry started from his pensive attitude, and begged us to be seated, and then a curtain was drawn, and we perceived through a glass a perspective view of ships, boats, and water! This raree-show over, the maid who officiated as show-woman had a hint given her, and presently a trap-door opened, and up jumped a covered table, ornamented with various devices. When we had expressed our delight at this long enough to satisfy Mr. Ferry, another hint was given, and presently down dropped an eagle from the ceiling, whose talons were put into a certain hook at the top of the covering of the table, and when the admiration at this was over, up again flew the eagle, conveying in his talons the cover, and leaving under it a repast of cakes, sweetmeats, oranges, and jellies.

When our raptures upon this feat subsided, the maid received another signal, and then seated herself in an arm-chair, which presently sunk down underground, and up in its room came a barber's block, with a vast quantity of black wool on it, and a high head-dress.

This, you may be sure, was more applauded than all the rest; we were *en extase,* and having properly expressed our gratitude, were soon after suffered to decamp.

You may easily believe that these sights occasioned us a good merry walk home; indeed we laughed all the way, and thought but little how time went till we were again crossing the Avon, when we were reminded of it by seeing the windows full of company.

This was the worst part of the story. Mrs. Thrale was in horrid confusion, but as the bishop gave her absolution, her apologies were very good-naturedly accepted in general. But Mrs. Byron, half affronted, had decamped before we returned, and Mr. Travell, the beau, looked very grim at this breach of etiquette, and made his bow just after we returned. But what was to me most vexatious, was finding that Mrs. Carter,[1] had been waiting for us near an hour. The loss of her company I most sincerely regretted, because it was irretrievable, as she was to leave Bath next day.

The rest of the party waiting consisted of Miss Cooper, Misses F. and Harriet Bowdler, Miss Sharp, who is always with Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Lambart, and my gentle friend Augusta. The two latter had been to Spring Gardens in search of us, where they had drank tea, but we were then at Mr. Ferry's.

As soon as the general apologies were over, Miss Cooper, who knew my earnest desire of being introduced to Mrs. Carter, kindly came up to me, and taking my hand, led me to her venerable friend, and told her who I was. Mrs. Carter arose, and received me with a smiling air of benevolence that more than answered all my expectations of her. She is really a noble-looking woman; I never saw age so graceful in the female sex yet; her whole face seems to beam with goodness, piety, and philanthropy.

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[1] Elizabeth Carter, 1717-1806, the friend of Johnson, and translator of Epictetus, 1758. She lived at Deal.

She told me she had lately seen some relations of mine at Mrs. Ord's who had greatly delighted her by their musical talents—meaning, I found, Mr. Burney and our Etty; and she said something further in their praise, and of the pleasure they had given her; but as I was standing in a large circle, all looking on, and as I kept her standing, I hardly could understand what she said, and soon after returned to my seat.

She scarce stayed three minutes longer. When she had left the room, I could not forbear following her to the head of the stairs, on the pretence of inquiring for her cloak. She then turned round to me, and looking at me with an air of much kindness, said, "Miss Burney, I have been greatly obliged to you long before I have seen you, and must now thank you for the very great entertainment you have given me."

This was so unexpected a compliment that I was too much astonished to make any answer. However, I am very proud of it from Mrs. Carter, and I will not fail to seek another meeting with her when I return to town,—which I shall be able enough to do by means of Miss Cooper, or Miss Ord, or Mrs. Pepys.

. . . . .

You are, indeed, a most good and sweet girl for writing so copiously, and you oblige and indulge me more than I can express.

Well, after I had read your letter, I went to the Belvidere, and made Mr. Thrale accompany me by way of exercise, for the Belvidere is near a mile from our house, and all up hill.

Mrs. Leigh and her fair daughter received me with their usual kindness, which, indeed, is quite affectionate, and I found with them Miss Harriet Bowdler and Captain Frodsham. I negotiated matters with all the address in my power, and softened Mrs. Byron's haughty permission into a very civil invitation, which I hoped would occasion an agreeable meeting. Captain Frodsham is a very sensible, well-bred, and pleasing young man: he returned me many thanks for my interference, and said he would wait upon Mrs. Byron very speedily.

We made a long visit here, as the people were mighty likeable, and then Miss Harriet Bowdler, Miss Leigh, and Captain Frodsham accompanied us to the parade, *i.e.* home.

In the evening we all went to Mrs. Cholmley's, where we met Mrs. Poyntz, and were, as usual at that house, sociable, cheerful, and easy.

Tuesday.—This morning, by appointment, we met a party at the pump-room, thence to proceed to Spring Gardens, to a public breakfast.[1] The folks, however, were not to their time, and we sallied forth only with the addition of Miss Weston and Miss Byron.

As soon as we entered the gardens, Augusta, who had hold of my arm, called out, "Ah! there's the man I danced with at the ball! and he plagued me to death, asking me if I liked this, and that, and the other, and, when I said 'No,' he asked me what I did like? So, I suppose he thought me a fool, and so, indeed, I am! only you are so good to me that I wrote my sister Sophy word you had almost made me quite vain; and she wrote to me t'other day a private letter, and told me how glad she was you were come back, for, indeed, I had written her word I should be quite sick of my life here, if it was not for sometimes seeing you."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 388.

The gentleman to whom she pointed presently made up to us, and I found he was Captain Bouchier, the same who had rattled away at Mr. Whalley's. He instantly joined Miss Weston and consequently our party, and was in the same style of flighty raillery as before. He seems to have a very good understanding, and very quick parts, but he is rather too conscious of both: however, he was really very entertaining, and as he abided wholly by Miss Weston, whose delicacy gave way to gaiety and flash, whether she would or not, I was very glad that he made one among us.

The rest of the company soon came, and were Mr. and Mrs. Whalley, Mrs. Lambart, Mrs. Aubrey, Colonel Campbell, an old officer and old acquaintance of Mr. Thrale, and some others, both male and female, whose names I know not.

We all sat in one box, but we had three tea-makers. Miss Weston presided at that table to which I belonged, and Augusta, Captain Bouchier, and herself were of our set. And gay enough we were, for the careless rattle of Captain Bouchier, which paid no regard to the daintiness of Miss Weston, made her obliged, in her own defence, to abate her finery, and laugh, and rally, and rail, in her turn. But, at last, I really began to fear that this flighty officer would bring on a serious quarrel, for, among other subjects he was sporting, he, unfortunately, started that of the Bath Easton Vase, which he ridiculed without mercy, and yet, according to all I have heard of it, without any injustice; but Mrs. Whalley, who overheard him, was quite irritated with him. Sir John and Lady Miller are her friends, and she thought it incumbent upon her to vindicate even this vain folly, which she did weakly and warmly, while Captain Bouchier only laughed and ridiculed them the more. Mrs. Whalley then coloured, and grew quite enraged, reasoning upon the wickedness of laughing at her good friends, and talking of generosity and sentiment. Meanwhile, he scampered from side to side, to avoid her; laughed, shouted, and tried every way of braving it out; but was compelled at last to be serious, and enter into a solemn defence of his intentions, which were, he said, to ridicule the vase, not the Millers.

In the evening we went to Mrs. Lambart's; but of that visit, in which I made a very extraordinary new acquaintance, in my next packet; for this will not hold the account.

Wednesday.—To go on with Mrs. Lambart. The party was Mr. and Mrs. Vanbrugh—the former a good sort of man—the latter, Captain Bouchier says, reckons herself a woman of humour, but she kept it prodigious snug; Lord Huntingdon, a very deaf old lord; Sir Robert Pigot, a very thin old baronet; Mr. Tyson, a very civil master of the ceremonies; Mr. and Mrs. White, a very insignificant couple; Sir James C——, a bawling old man; two Misses C——, a pair of tonish misses; Mrs. and Miss Byron; Miss W——, and certain others I knew nothing of.

Augusta Byron, according to custom, had entered into conversation with me, and we were talking about her sisters, and her affairs, when Mr. E—— (whose name I forgot to mention), came to inform me that Mrs. Lambart begged to speak to me. She was upon a sofa with Miss W——, who, it seemed, desired much to be introduced to me, and so I took a chair facing them.

Miss W—— is young and pleasing in her appearance, not pretty, but agreeable in her face, and soft, gentle, and well-bred in her manners. Our conversation, for some time, was upon the common Bath topics; but when Mrs. Lambart left us—called to receive more company—we went insensibly into graver matters.

As I soon found, by the looks and expressions of this young lady, that she was of a peculiar cast, I left all choice of subjects to herself, determined quietly to follow as she led; and very soon, and I am sure I know not how, we had for topics the follies and vices of mankind, and, indeed, she spared not for lashing them. The women she rather excused than defended, laying to the door of the men their faults and imperfections; but the men, she said, were all bad—all, in one word, and without exception, sensualists!

I stared much at a severity of speech for which her softness of manner had so ill-prepared me; and she, perceiving my surprise, said,

"I am sure I ought to apologise for speaking my opinion to you—you, who have so just and so uncommon a knowledge of human nature. I have long wished ardently to have the honour of conversing with you; but your party has, altogether, been regarded as so formidable, that I have not had courage to approach it."

I made—as what could I do else?—disqualifying speeches, and she then led to discoursing of happiness and misery: the latter she held to be the invariable lot of us all; and "one word," she added, "we have in our language, and in all others, for which there is never any essential necessity, and that is—*pleasure*!" And her eyes filled with tears as she spoke.

"How you amaze me!" cried I; "I have met with misanthropes before, but never with so complete a one; and I can hardly think I hear right when I see how young you are."

She then, in rather indirect terms, gave me to understand that she was miserable at home, and in very direct terms, that she was wretched abroad;

and openly said, that to affliction she was born, and in affliction she must die, for that the world was so vilely formed as to render happiness impossible for its inhabitants.

There was something in this freedom of repining that I could by no means approve, and, as I found by all her manner that she had a disposition to even respect whatever I said, I now grew very serious, and frankly told her that I could not think it consistent with either truth or religion to cherish such notions.

"One thing," answered she, "there is, which I believe might make me happy, but for that I have no inclination: it is an amorous disposition; but that I do not possess. I can make myself no happiness by intrigue."

"I hope not, indeed!" cried I, almost confounded by her extraordinary notions and speeches; "but, surely, there are worthier subjects of happiness attainable!"

"No, I believe there are not, and the reason the men are happier than us, is because they are more sensual!"

"I would not think such thoughts," cried I, clasping my hands with an involuntary vehemence, "for worlds!"

The Misses C—— then interrupted us, and seated themselves next to us; but Miss W—— paid them little attention at first, and soon after none at all; but, in a low voice, continued her discourse with me, recurring to the same subject of happiness and misery, upon which, after again asserting the folly of ever hoping for the former, she made this speech,

"There may be, indeed, one moment of happiness, which must be the finding one worthy of exciting a passion which one should dare own to himself. That would, indeed be a moment worth living for! but that can never happen—I am sure, not to me—the men are so low, so vicious, so worthless! No, there is not one such to be found!"

What a strange girl! I could do little more than listen to her, from surprise at all she said.

"If, however," she continued, "I had your talents I could, bad as this world is, be happy in it. There is nothing, there is nobody I envy like you. With such resources as yours there can never be *ennui*; the mind may always be employed, and always be gay! Oh, if I could write as you write!"

"Try,"cried I, "that is all that is wanting: try, and you will soon do much better things!"

"Oh no! I have tried, but I cannot succeed."

"Perhaps you are too diffident. But is it possible you can be serious in so dreadful an assertion as that you are never happy? Are you sure that some real misfortune would not show you that your present misery is imaginary?"

"I don't know," answered she, looking down, "perhaps it is so,—but in that case 'tis a misery so much the harder to be cured."

"You surprise me more and more," cried I; "is it possible you can so rationally see the disease of a disordered imagination, and yet allow it such power over your mind?"

"Yes, for it is the only source from which I draw any shadow of felicity. Sometimes when in the country, I give way to my imagination for whole days, and then I forget the world and its cares, and feel some enjoyment of existence."

"Tell me what is then your notion of felicity? Whither does your castle-building carry you?"

"Oh, quite out of the world—I know not where, but I am surrounded with sylphs, and I forget everything besides."

"Well, you are a most extraordinary character, indeed; I must confess I have seen nothing like you!"

"I hope, however, I shall find something like myself, and, like the magnet rolling in the dust, attract some metal as I go."

"That you may attract what you please, is of all things the most likely; but if you wait to be happy for a friend resembling yourself, I shall no longer wonder at your despondency."

"Oh!" cried she, raising her eyes in ecstasy, "could I find such a one!—male or female—for sex would be indifferent to me. With such a one I would go to live directly."

I half laughed, but was perplexed in my own mind whether to be sad or merry at such a speech.

"But then," she continued, "after making, should I lose such a friend, I would not survive."

"Not survive?" repeated I, "what can you mean?"

She looked down, but said nothing.

"Surely you cannot mean," said I, very gravely indeed, "to put a violent end to your life?"

"I should not," said she, again looking up, "hesitate a moment."

I was quite thunderstruck, and for some time could not say a word; but when I did speak, it was in a style of exhortation so serious and earnest, I am ashamed to write it to you, lest you should think it too much.

She gave me an attention that was even respectful, but when I urged her to tell me by what right she thought herself entitled to rush unlicensed on eternity, she said, "By the right of believing I shall be extinct."

I really felt horror-struck.

"Where, for Heaven's sake," I cried, "where have you picked up such dreadful reasoning?"

"In Hume," said she; "I have read his *Essays* repeatedly."

"I am sorry to find they have power to do so much mischief. You should not have read them, at least till a man equal to Hume in abilities had answered him. Have you read any more infidel writers?"

"Yes, Bolingbroke, the divinest of all writers."

"And do you read nothing upon the right side?"

"Yes, the Bible, till I was sick to death of it, every Sunday evening to my mother."

"Have you read Beattie on the Immutability of Truth."[1]

"No."

"Give me leave then to recommend it to you. After Hume's *Essays* you ought to read it. And even for lighter reading, if you were to look at Mason's 'Elegy on Lady Coventry,' it might be of no disservice to you."

And then I could not forbear repeating to her from that beautiful poem,

"Yet, know, vain sceptics, know, th' Almighty Mind
Who breath'd on man a portion of His fire,
Bade his free soul, by earth nor time confin'd,
To Heaven, to immortality, aspire!

"Nor shall the pile of hope, His mercy rear'd,
By vain philosophy be e'er destroy'd;
Eternity—by all, or wish'd, or fear'd,
Shall be by all, or suffer'd, or enjoy'd!"[2]

This was the chief of our conversation, which indeed made an impression upon me I shall not easily get rid of. A young and agreeable infidel is even a shocking sight, and with her romantic, flighty, and unguarded turn of mind, what could happen to her that could give surprise?

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[1] Beattie's "Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth" was published in 1770 as an antidote to the philosophy of Hume.

[2] These are the final lines of Mason's "Elegy on the Death of a Lady" (Maria Gunning, Countess of Coventry, *d.* 1760, in which year the Elegy was written).

Poor misguided girl! I heartily indeed wish she was in good hands. She is in a very dangerous situation, with ideas so loose of religion, and so enthusiastic of love. What, indeed, is there to restrain an infidel, who has no belief in a future state, from sin and evil of any sort?

[Before we left Mrs. Lambart, Mrs. Byron took me aside to beg I would go and make her peace with Captain Frodsham. Droll enough to have the tables so turned. She feared, she said, that she had offended him by certain unfortunate reflections she had inadvertently cast upon some officers to whom he was related. The particulars would but tire you; but I readily undertook the commission, and assured her I was certain such condescension on her part would make the captain all her own.

Augusta, with her usual sweetness, lamented seeing so little of me, as Miss W—— had occupied me solely; but said she did not wonder, and had no right to complain, as she wished to do the same. She is, indeed, quite romantic in her partiality.

Thursday.—In the morning I walked to the Belvidere, to execute my commission. Captain Frodsham I met at Mrs. Leigh's, and began my treaty of peace, but soon found he had taken no offence, but, on the contrary, had been much charmed with Mrs. Byron's conversation and vivacity. I had therefore soon done, and having spent an hour with them very agreeably, I proceeded to Mrs. Byron, to tell her the success of the negotiation. Augusta walked back with me, but on the South Parade we met Miss C——, who joined me, and then the bashful Augusta would not go another step, but hastily shook my hand and ran away.

At night, however, we met again, as we had a party at home, consisting of the Byrons, Dean of Ossory, Mrs. and Charlotte Lewis, Mrs. Lambart, and Dr. Finch.

Dr. Finch is a tall, large, rather handsome, smiling, and self-complacent clergyman. He talked very much of an old lady here aged ninety, who was very agreeable, and upon inquiry I found she was Mrs. Ord's mother, Mrs. Dellingham. I could not forbear wishing to see her, and then Dr. Finch, who lodges in the same house with her, was very pressing to introduce me to her. I could not agree to so abrupt an intrusion, but I did not object to his making overtures for such a meeting, as my affection and respect for Mrs. Ord made me extremely wish to see her mother.

Friday.—Early this morning I received my Susan's second packet of this second Bath journey. The remaining account of the *miserere* concert is very entertaining, and Rauzzini's badinage diverted me much.

I have nobody to tell you of here that you care a fig for, but not caring, you may sometimes have a chance of being diverted,—so on I go.

This morning, by appointment, I was to breakfast with Miss Leigh. Just as I came to the pump-room, I met Mr. and Mrs. Cholmley. The latter shook hands with me, and said she should leave Bath in a day or two. I was very sorry for it, as she is a real loss to me. On, then, I posted, and presently before me I perceived Lord Mulgrave. As I was rather hurried, I meant to take an adroit turn to pass him, but he was in a frisky humour, and danced before me from side to side to stop me, saying, "Why where now, where are you posting so fast?"

I then halted, and we talked a little talk of the Thrales, of the weather, etc., and then finding he was at his old trick of standing still before me, without seeming to have any intention we should separate, though I did not find he had anything more to say, I rather abruptly wished him good-morning and whisked off.

I had, however, only gone another street ere I again encountered him, and then we both laughed, and he walked on with me. He himself lives at the Belvidere, and very good-humouredly made my pace his, and chatted with me all the way, till I stopped at Mrs. Leigh's. Our confabulation however was all about Bath matters and people, and, therefore, will not bear writing, though I assure you it was pretty enough, and of half a mile's length.

[At the Leighs' I found Harriet Bowdler, and passed the morning very comfortably.]

In the evening was the last ball expected to be at Bath this season, and, therefore, knowing we could go to no other, it was settled we should go to this. Of our party were Mrs. Byron and Augusta, Miss Philips, and Charlotte Lewis.

Mrs. Byron was placed at the upper end of the room by Mr. Tyson, because she is honourable, and her daughter next to her; I, of course, the lowest of our party; but the moment Mr. Tyson had arranged us, Augusta arose, and nothing would satisfy her but taking a seat not only next to but below me; nor could I, for my life, get the better of the affectionate humility with which she quite supplicated me to be content. She was soon after followed by Captain Brisbane, a young officer, who had met her in Spring Gardens, and seemed much struck with her, and was now presented to her by Mr. Tyson for her partner.

Captain Brisbane is a very pretty sort of young man, but did not much enliven us. Soon after I perceived Captain Bouchier, who, after talking some time with Mrs. Thrale, and various parties, made up to us, and upon Augusta's being called upon to dance a minuet, took her place, and began a very lively sort of chit-chat.

[I had, however, no small difficulty to keep him from abusing my friend Augusta. He had once danced with her, and their commerce had not been much to her advantage. I defended her upon the score of her amiable simplicity and unaffected ingenuousness, but I could not have the courage to contradict him when he said he had no notion she was very brilliant by the conversation he had with her. Augusta, indeed, is nothing less than brilliant, but she is natural, artless, and very affectionate.]

Just before she went to dance her minuet, upon my admiring her bouquet, which was the most beautiful in the room, she tore from it the only two moss-roses in it, and so spoilt it all before her exhibition, merely that I might have the best of it.

Country dances were now preparing, and Captain Bouchier asked me for the honour of my hand, but I had previously resolved not to dance, and, therefore, declined his offer. But he took, of the sudden, a fancy to prate with me, and therefore budged not after the refusal.

He told me this was the worst ball for company there had been the whole season; and, with a wicked laugh that was too significant to be misunderstood, said, "And, as you have been to no other, perhaps you will give this for a specimen of a Bath ball!"

He told me he had very lately met with Hannah More, and then mentioned Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Carter, whence he took occasion to say most high and fine things of the ladies of the present age,—their writings, and talents; and I soon found he had no small reverence for us blue-stockings.

About this time, Charlotte,[1] who had confessedly dressed herself for dancing, but whose pretty face had by some means been overlooked, drawled towards us, and asked me why I would not dance?

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[1] Charlotte Lewis. See *ante*, p. 339.

"I never intended it," said I; "but I hoped to have seen you."

"No," said she, yawning, "no more shall I,—I don't choose it."

"Don't you?" said Captain Bouchier drily, "why not?"

"Why, because I don't like it."

"Oh fie!" cried he; "consider how cruel that is."

"I must consider myself," said she pertly; "for I don't choose to heat myself this hot weather."

Just then, a young man came forward, and requested her hand. She coloured, looked excessively silly, and walked off with him to join the dancers.

When, between the dances, she came our way, he plagued her, *à la* Sir Clement.[1]

"Well," cried he, "so you have been dancing this hot night! I thought you would have considered yourself better?"

"Oh," said she, "I could not help it—I had much rather not;—it was quite disagreeable to me."

"No, no,—pardon me there!" said he maliciously; "I saw pleasure dance first in your eyes; I never saw you look more delighted: you were quite the queen of smiles!"

She looked as if she could have killed him; and yet, from giddiness and good-humour, was compelled to join in the laugh.

After this we went to tea. When that was over, and we all returned to the ball-room, Captain Bouchier followed me, and again took a seat next mine, which he kept, without once moving, the whole night.

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[1] Cf. *Evelinà*, Letter xiii.

[He again applied to me to dance, but I was more steady than Charlotte; and he was called upon, and reproached by Captain Brisbane and others for sitting still when there were so few dancers; but he told them he could not endure being pressed into the service, or serving at all under the master of the ceremonies.

Well, I have no more time for particulars, though we had much more converse; for so it happened that we talked all the evening almost together, as Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Byron were engaged with each other: Miss Thrale, who did not dance, was fairly jockeyed out of her place next me by Captain Bouchier, and the other young ladies were with their partners.]

Before we broke up, this Captain asked me if I should be at the play next night?—"Yes," I could not but say, as we had had places taken some time; but I did not half like it, for his manner of asking plainly implied, "If *you* go, why *I* will!"

When we made our exit, he saw me safe out of the rooms, with as much attention as if we had actually been partners. As we were near home we did not get into chairs; and Mr. Travell joined us in our walk.

"Why, what a flirtation!" cried Mrs. Thrale; "why, Burney, this is a man of taste!—Pray, Mr. Travell, will it do? What has he?"

"Twenty thousand pounds, ma'am," answered the beau.

"Oh ho! has he so?—Well, well, we'll think of it."

Finding her so facetious, I determined not to acquaint her with the query concerning the play, knowing that, if I did, and he appeared there, she would be outrageous in merriment. She is a most dear creature, but never restrains her tongue in anything, nor, indeed, any of her feelings:—she laughs, cries, scolds, sports, reasons, makes fun,—does everything she has an inclination to do, without any study of prudence, or thought of blame; and, pure and artless as is this character, it often draws both herself and others into scrapes, which a little discretion would avoid.

PART IX

1780

Bath diary resumed—A dinner-party—Raillery—Flirtation—The Bath theatre—Bath actors—The Abbey Church—Garrick and Quin—Morning calls—Curiosity—The Dean of Ossory—Beau Travell—Family quarrels—An oddity—Bath Easton—Female admiration—Miss Bowdler—A female sceptic—A baby critic—Lord George Gordon—The No-Popery riots—Danger of Mr. Thrale from the riots—Precipitate retreat—Letters from Miss Burney—Public excitement—Riots at Bath—Salisbury—Mr. Thrale's house attacked—Letters from Dr. Burney and Mrs. Thrale—Description of the riots—Brighton society—Conclusion of the riots—Letters from Miss Burney—Pacchierotti—A dinner-party at Dr. Burney's—Lord Sandwich—Captain Cook's Journal—Letter from Mrs. Thrale—Brighton society—Grub Street—Miss Burney to Mrs. Thrale—Dangerous times—A dinner-party at Dr. Burney's—A visit to Dr. Johnson—Miss Burney and Dr. Johnson in Grub Street—Son of Edmund Burke—A female rattle—Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*—Streatham diary resumed—Brighton—Lady Hesketh—Lady Shelley—A juvenile musician—Dangerous illness of Mr. Thrale—Dr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy—Lady Ladd—Letters—Sheridan's *Critic*—*Evelina* in the Bodleian Library—Promotion—Chit-chat.

Bath Diary resumed

June.—I feel myself inclined, my dearest Susy, to do nothing now but write to you; and so many packets do I owe you, that *le devoir* here joins *l'inclination.*

I left off with Friday's ball.

Saturday morning I spent in visiting. [When I took leave of the Cholmleys, called on the Lewis's, Kynaston, Weston, Whalley, Mrs. Lambart, and the Bowdlers.]

At dinner we had Mrs. Lambart and Colonel Campbell. All the discourse was upon Augusta Byron's having made a conquest of Captain Brisbane, and the match was soon concluded upon, —at least, they all allowed it would be decided this night, when she was to go with us to the play; and if Captain Brisbane was there, why then he was *in for it*, and the thing was done.

Well — Augusta came at the usual time; Colonel Campbell took leave, but Mrs. Lambart accompanied us to the play: and, in the lobby, the first object we saw was Captain Brisbane. He immediately advanced to us, and, joining our party, followed us to our box.

Nothing could equal the wickedness of Mrs. Thrale and Mrs. Lambart; they smiled at each other with such significance! Fortunately, however, Augusta did not observe them.

Well, we took our seats, and Captain Brisbane, by getting into the next box, on a line with ours, placed himself next to Augusta: but, hardly had Mrs. T. and L. composed their faces, ere I heard the box-door open. Every one looked round but me, and I had reasons for avoiding such curiosity, —reasons well enough founded, for instantly grins, broader than before, widened the mouths of the two married ladies, while even Miss Thrale began a titter that half choked her, and Augusta, nodding to me with an arch smirk, said, "Miss Burney, I wish you joy!"

To be sure I could have no doubt who entered, but, very innocently, I demanded of them all the cause of their mirth. They scrupled not explaining themselves; and I found my caution, in not mentioning the query that had been put to me, availed me nothing, for the Captain was already a marked man in my service!

He placed himself exactly behind me, but very quietly and silently, and did not, for some minutes, speak to me; afterwards, however, he did a little, —except when my favourite, Mr. Lee, who acted Old Norval, in *Douglas*,[1] was on the stage, and then he was strictly silent. I am in no cue to write our discourse; but it was pleasant and entertaining enough at the time, and his observations upon the play and the players were lively and comical. But I was prodigiously worried by my own party, who took every opportunity to inquire how I was entertained, and so forth,—and to snigger.

Two young ladies, who seemed about eighteen, and sat above us, were so much shocked by the death of Douglas, that they both burst into a loud fit of roaring, like little children,—and sobbed on, afterwards, for almost half the farce! I was quite astonished; and Miss Weston complained that they really disturbed her sorrows; but Captain Bouchier was highly diverted, and went to give them comfort, as if they had been babies, telling them it was all over, and that they need not cry any more.

Sunday.—In the morning, after church-time, I spent an hour or two in looking over the abbey-church, and reading epitaphs, — among which, Garrick's on Quin was much the best.[2] [There is a monument erected, also, for Sarah Fielding, who wrote *David Simple*, by Dr. Hoadley.]

Will any future doctor do as much for me?]

In the afternoon, I called upon the Leighs, to take leave, as they were going from Bath next day. [Mrs. Leigh was out, but her daughter kept me to the last minute another engagement would allow, and then took quite a kind and friendly farewell. She is really so sensible, so well-bred, and so engaging, that I shall always be very happy to meet with her. I gave her our direction and she promised to make use of it.

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[1] A tragedy by John Home, 1722-1808. It was first produced at Edinburgh in 1756.

[2] See *ante*, p. 63 *n*.

From her] I went to Mrs. Byron's, where the Thrales were already, and a large party: Lord Mulgrave, Mrs. Vanbrugh, Mrs. Lambart, Captains Brisbane and Frodsham, Beau Travell, Mr. Tyson, the Hon. Mr. Wyndham, brother to Lord Egremont, and Mr. Chadwick.

[Though the party was so good, I have not a word to write concerning it, for I only conversed with Augusta and, on her account, Captain Brisbane; and though she is a very sweet girl, she is not, as Captain Bouchier said, very brilliant, and therefore I should not dazzle you with much wit in recording our speeches.

Monday.—At breakfast, Mrs. Thrale said, "Ah, you never tell me your love-secrets, but I could tell you one if I chose it!" This produced entreaties—and entreaties thus much further—

"Why, I know very well who is in love with Fanny Burney!"

I told her that was more than I did, but owned it was not difficult to me to guess who she meant, though I could not tell what.

"Captain Bouchier," said she. "But you did not tell me so, nor he either; I had it from Mr. Tyson, our master of the ceremonies, who told me you made a conquest of him at the ball; and he knows these matters pretty well; 'tis his trade to know them."

"Well-a-day!" quoth I, "'tis unlucky we did not meet a little sooner, for this very day he is ordered away with his troop into Norfolk."

After breakfast, Fanny Bowdler called upon me, and we were *tête-à-tête* all the morning. She is an extraordinary good *tête-à-tête*, and I did not think her the less agreeable, I suppose, for telling me that Mrs. Carter has condescended to speak of me in very flattering terms since our meeting.

She told me also that Miss Leigh is soon to be married to Captain Frodsham. I am very glad of it, as they seem very deserving of each other, and will make a most agreeable and sensible pair.]

In the evening we were at the Vanbrughs', where we met Mr., Mrs., and Miss G——, all three mighty tonish folks: the Mr. in a common and heavy way, the Mrs. in an insolent, overbearing way, and the Miss in a shy, proud, stiff way. Also the good-humoured Dr. Maningham, and Mrs. and Miss ditto, of no characters apparent; Miss Jones, an ugly, sensible, reserved woman; her father — I know not what; Mr. Tom Pitt, a prosing, conceited man of fashion, and sense to boot; Mrs. Lambart, Mrs. Byron, and some others I know not.

All the early part of the evening Miss Thrale and I sat together; but afterwards Mrs. Thrale, who was at another part of the room, called me over, and said,

"Come, Miss Burney, come and tell Mrs. Lambart about these *green rails* at Clifton."

And so saying, she gave me her seat, which was between Mrs. Lambart and Mrs. Byron, and walked away to other folks.

I found they had all been laughing about some house upon Clifton Hill with green rails, which Mrs. Lambart vowed was *Mrs. Beaumont's*,[1] and said she was sure I must have meant it should seem such: and a sportively complimentary conversation took place, and lasted till Mrs. G——, having cut out at cards, with an air of tonish stateliness approached us, and seating herself by Mrs. Lambart, and nearly opposite to me, fixed her eyes on my face, and examined it with a superb dignity of assurance that made me hardly know what I said, in my answers to Mrs. Lambart and Mrs. Byron.

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[1] Mrs. Beaumont is a character in *Evelina*, whose house was on Clifton Hill.

Having looked in silence till she was tired, in which I must own I felt some sympathy, she whispered Mrs. Lambart,

"Is that Miss Burney?"

"Yes," re-whispered Mrs. Lambart; "shall I introduce her to you?"

"No, no," answered she, "I can do that well enough."

This, though all in very low voices, I was too near not to hear; and I began to feel monstrous glumpy upon this last speech, which indeed was impertinent enough.

Soon after, this high lady said,

"Were you ever in Bath before, Miss Burney?"

"Yes, ma'am," I replied, very drily; and to show how little I should stoop the lower for her airs, I instantly went on talking with Mrs. Byron, without allowing her an opportunity for the conference she seemed opening. Characters of this sort always make me as proud as they are themselves; while the avidity with which Mrs. Byron honours, and the kindness with which Mrs. Thrale delights me, make me ready to kiss even the dust that falls from their feet.

Having now, therefore, reanimated my courage, I took a fit of talking, and made my own part good, and then I less minded her busy eyes, which never a moment spared me.

This lasted till Mrs. Thrale again joined us, and sat down next to Mrs. G——, who, in a few minutes, said to her in a whisper,

"She is just what I have heard—I like her vastly."

This quite amazed me, for her whisper was unavoidably heard by me, as we all sat cheek by jowl; and presently she repeated with yet more earnestness,

"I like her of all things."

"Yes, she is a sweet creature indeed," answered my dear puffer, "and I am sure I love her dearly."

Afterwards, she asked Mrs. Thrale a hundred questions concerning Dr. Johnson, with an air and an abruptness that provoked her so she could hardly answer her; and when Mrs. Lambart again hinted at the green rails, Mrs. G——, looking at me with a smile the softest she could assume, said,

"I am a great admirer of *Evelina*—I think it has very great merit."

And I daresay she thought the praise of Dr. Johnson had never been half so flattering to me.

Tuesday evening we spent at the Dean of Ossory's. We met no company there but Dr. Finch, who appointed the next morning for presenting me to Mrs. Dellingham.[1] (*N.B.* I hope I have mentioned this doctor is married, otherwise you may be justly and cruelly alarmed for my reputation.)

[All my afternoon was devoted to Charlotte L——, whose wild, giddy nonsense entertained me passing well.

O Heavens! I forgot that Beau Travell was there! and just before we went, he came up to Charlotte and me, to upbraid us for talking only to each other, and then he said,

"I am sorry, Miss Burney, that your friend

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[1] Mrs. Ord's mother. See *ante*, p. 188.

Captain Bouchier is gone; he is ordered directly into Norfolk."

Our friendship, I told him, was quite long enough of duration to make us vastly afflicted that it was broken up.]

Wednesday.—Dr. Finch called in the morning, and escorted me to Mrs. Dellingham's.

Mrs. Dellingham is said to be ninety and more; I, therefore, expected to walk up to her easy chair and bawl out in her ear, "Ma'am, your servant"; but no such thing happened; to my great surprise, she met me at the door of the drawing-room, took my hand, welcomed me very politely, and led me to the best seat at the upper end of the room. She is a very venerable and cheerful old gentlewoman, walks well, hears readily, is almost quite upright, and very chatty and well bred.

My discourse, as you may imagine, was all of Mrs. Ord; but Dr. Finch took care it should not be much, as he is one of those placid prosers who are never a moment silent.

As soon as I had returned home, Charlotte L——[1] called, and the little gig[2] told all the quarrels and all *les malheurs* of the domestic life she led in her family, and made them all ridiculous, without meaning to make herself so.

She was but just gone, when I was again called down to Miss Weston—nobody else at home: and then I was regaled with a character equally ludicrous, but much less entertaining, for nothing would she talk of but "dear nature," and nothing abuse but "odious affectation!" She really would be too bad for the stage, for she is never so content as when drawing her own character for other people's as if on purpose to make one sick of it.

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[1] Lewis.

[2] A flighty person. Davies's *Supplementary Glossary*, 1881, gives Miss Burney as authority for this word.

She begged, however, for my town direction, and talked in high strains of the pleasure she should have in visiting me. But in London we can manage those matters better. She was to leave Bath next day.

Mrs. Whalley also called *pour prendre congé*, and made much invitation to her country seat for us.

In the evening, we all went to Mrs. Lambart's, where we met the Grenvilles, Byrons, Vanbrughs, Captain Brisbane, Messrs. Chadwicke, Travell, and Wyndham, Miss Philips, Lady Dorothy Inglish, Lord Cunningham, and various others. But I have no time for particulars, and, as I shall, perhaps, see few of them any more, no inclination.

Thursday, June 8.—We went to Bath Easton. Mrs. Lambart went with us.

The house is charmingly situated, well fitted up, convenient, and pleasant, and not large, but commodious and elegant. Thursday is still their public day for company, though the business of the vase is over for this season.

The room into which we were conducted was so much crowded we could hardly make our way. Lady Miller came to the door, and, as she had first done to the rest of us, took my hand, and led me up to a most prodigious fat old lady, and introduced me to her. This was Mrs. Riggs, her ladyship's mother, who seems to have Bath Easton and its owners under her feet.

I was smiled upon with a graciousness designedly marked, and seemed most uncommonly welcome. Mrs. Riggs looked as if she could have shouted for joy at sight of me! She is mighty merry and facetious. Sir John was very quiet, but very civil.

I saw the place appropriated for the vase, but at this time it was removed.[1] As it was hot, Sir

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[1] As, at this date, the famous Frascati vase was not *en fonction*, and

John Miller offered us to walk round the house, and see his green-house, etc. So away we set off, Harriet Bowdler accompanying me, and some others following.

We had not strolled far ere we were overtaken by another party, and among them I perceived Miss W——, my new sceptical friend. She joined me immediately, and I found she was by no means in so sad a humour as when I saw her last; on the contrary, she seemed flightily gay.

"Were you never here before?" she asked me.

"No."

"No? why, what an acquisition you are then! I suppose you will contribute to the vase?"

"No, indeed!"

"No more you ought; you are quite too good for it."

"No, not that; but I have no great passion for making the trial. You, I suppose, have contributed?"

"No, never—I can't. I have tried, but I could never write verses in my life—never get beyond Cupid and stupid."

"Did Cupid, then, always come in your way? what a mischievous urchin!"

"No, he has not been very mischievous to me this year."

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as Miss Burney never contributed to it, brief notice of it is all that is here required. It stood in a bow window overlooking the Avon at Lady Miller's villa at Batheaston, near Bath, and into it, periodically, her guests dropped their poetical contributions. These were afterwards submitted to a critical committee, who selected the best three, to the writers of which the hostess presented suitable prizes. Walpole and Johnson pooh-poohed these ingenuous diversions; and Macaulay speaks scoffingly of the proceedings. Yet Anstey and Garrick and Miss Seward were occasional contributors, and the verses cannot all have been contemptible. They were subsequently collected under the title of *Poetical Amusements at a Villa near Bath*, 1775-81, 4 vols. As for the vase itself, according to the Rector of Swanswick, Professor Earle (*Bath Ancient and Modern*, 1864, p. 214 *n.*), it is no more. On the other hand, it is stated in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1894) that it was "purchased by Edwyn Dowding, of Bath, and placed by him in the Public Park of the town." There is a print of it in vol. i. of *Poetical Amusements*.

"Not this year? Oh, very well! He has spared you, then, for a whole twelvemonth!"

She laughed, and we were interrupted by more company.

Afterwards, when we returned into the house, we found another room filled with company. Among those that I knew were the C——s, the G——s, some of the Bowdlers, Mr. Wyndham, and Miss J——.

This Miss J—— had, when I last met her at Mrs. Lambart's, desired to be introduced to me, as Mrs. Lambart told me, who performed that ceremony; for Mrs. Lambart, with whom I am in no small favour, always makes me the most consequential, and I found she was Mrs. Rishton's old friend, and, therefore, all I remember hearing of her gave me no desire to make her my new one. However, nothing convinced me more that I was the *ton* at Bath, than her making this overture, for everything I ever heard of her proved her insolent pride. Besides, Beau Travell has spoken very highly of me! So my fame is now made, and Mrs. G——, who had passed me when she entered the room at Bath Easton, while I was engaged in conversation with Lady Miller, afterwards suddenly came up, and with a look of equal surprise and pleasure at sight of me, most graciously and smilingly addressed me. My coldness in return to all these sickening, heartless, *ton*-led people, I try not to repress, though to treat them with such respect as their superior stations fairly claim, I would not for the world neglect.

Some time after, while I was talking with Miss W—— and Harriet Bowdler, Mrs. Riggs came up to us, and with an expression of comical admiration, fixed her eyes upon me, and for some time amused herself with apparently watching me. Mrs. Lambart, who was at cards, turned round and begged me to give her her cloak, for she felt rheumatic; I could not readily find it, and, after looking some time, I was obliged to give her my own; but while I was hunting, Mrs. Riggs followed me, laughing, nodding, and looking much delighted, and every now and then saying,

"That's right, Evelina!—Ah, look for it, Evelina!—Evelina always did so—she always looked for people's cloaks, and was obliging and well-bred!"

I grinned a little to be sure, but tried to escape her, by again getting between Miss W—— and Harriet Bowdler; but Mrs. Riggs still kept opposite to me, expressing from time to time, by uplifted hands and eyes, comical applause.

Harriet Bowdler modestly mumbled some praise, but addressed it to Miss Thrale. I begged a truce, and retired to a chair in a corner, at the request of Miss W——, to have a *tête-à-tête*, for which, however, her strange levity gave me no great desire.

She begged to know if I had written anything else. I assured her never.

"The *Sylph*,"[1] said she, "I am told, was yours."

"I had nothing at all to do with that or anything else that ever was published but *Evelina*; you, I suppose, read the *Sylph* for its name's sake?"

"No; I never read novels—I hate them; I never read *Evelina* till I was quite persecuted by hearing it talked of. *Sir Charles Grandison* I tried once, but could not bear it; Sir Charles for a lover! no lover for me! for a guardian or the trustee of an estate, he might do very well — but for a lover!"

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[1] The *Sylph*, 2 vols., was published by Lowndes, who—as we have seen—was not unwilling that it should be attributed to Miss Burney. It is reviewed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1779. "The whole," says Mr. Urban, "is well intended; but displays too great a knowledge of the *ton*, and the worst, though perhaps the highest, part of the world, to be the work of *a young Lady*, as has been said and supposed" (p. 316).

"What—when he bows upon your hand! would not that do?"

She kept me by her side for a full hour, and we again talked over our former conversation; and I inquired what first led her to seeking infidel books?

"Pope," she said; "he was himself a deist, she believed, and his praise of Bolingbroke made her mad to read his books, and then the rest followed easily."

She also gave me an account of her private and domestic life; of her misery at home, her search of dissipation, and her incapability of happiness.

Poor girl! I am really sorry for her; she has strong and lively parts, but I think her in the high road of lasting destruction. And she thinks about religion only to persuade herself there is none. I recommended to her all the good books I could think of, and scrupled not to express warmly and most seriously my surprise and horror at her way of thinking. It was easy to me to see that she attended to my opinions with curiosity, and yet easier to discover that had she not respected me as the author of a book she happened to be fond of, she would have rallied them unmercifully; however, that consideration gave weight to what I said, and evidently disposed her to be pleased with me.

Our conversation would have lasted till leave-taking, but for our being interrupted by Miss Miller, a most beautiful little girl of ten years old.

Miss W—— begged her to sing us a French song. She coquetted, but Mrs. Riggs came to us, and said if I wished it I did her grand-daughter great honour, and she insisted upon her obedience. The little girl laughed and complied, and we went into another room to hear her, followed by the Misses Caldwell. She sung in a pretty childish manner enough.

When we became more intimate, she said,

"Ma'am, I have a great favour to request of you, if you please!"

I begged to know what it was, and assured her I would grant it; and, to be out of the way of these misses, I led her to the window.

"Ma'am," said the little girl, "will you then be so good as to tell me where Evelina is now?"

I was a little surprised at the question, and told her I had not heard lately.

"Oh, ma'am, but I am sure you know!" cried she, "for you know you wrote it! and mamma was so good as to let me hear her read it; and pray, ma'am, do tell me where she is? and whether Miss Branghton and Miss Polly went to see her when she was married to Lord Orville?"

I promised her I would inquire, and let her know.

"And pray, ma'am, is Madame Duval with her now?"

And several other questions she asked me, with a childish simplicity that was very diverting. She took the whole for a true story, and was quite eager to know what was become of all the people. And when I said I would inquire, and tell her when we next met,

"Oh, but, ma'am," she said, "had not you better write it down, because then there would be more of it, you know?"

She told me repeatedly how sorry she was that I had not come to Bath Easton in "vase" time, and how sorry her mamma had been.

When we were coming away, and Lady Miller and Sir John had both taken very civil leave of me, I curtsied in passing Mrs. Riggs, and she rose, and called after me—"Set about another!"

When we came home, our newspaper accounts of the tumults in town, with Lord George Gordon and his mob, alarmed us very much; but we had still no notion of the real danger you were all in.

Friday.—We drank tea with the Bowdlers, and met Captain Frodsham. Fanny Bowdler congratulated me very wickedly upon my initiation at Bath Easton. At our return home we were informed a mob was surrounding a new Roman Catholic chapel. At first we disbelieved it, but presently one of the servants came and told us they were knocking it to pieces; and in half an hour, looking out of our windows, we saw it in flames! and listening, we heard loud and violent shouts!

I shall write no particulars; the horrible subject you have had more than your share of. Mrs. Thrale and I sat up till four o'clock, and walked about the parades, and at two we went with a large party to the spot, and saw the beautiful new building consuming; the mob then were all quiet—all still and silent, and everybody seemed but as spectators.

Saturday morning, to my inexpressible concern, brought me no letters from town, and my uneasiness to hear from you made me quite wretched. Mrs. Thrale had letters from Sir Philip Clerke and Mr. Perkins, to acquaint her that her town-house[1] had been three times attacked, but was at last saved by guards,—her children, plate, money, and valuables all removed. Streatham also threatened, and emptied of all its furniture.

The same morning also we saw a Bath and Bristol paper, in which Mr. Thrale was asserted to be a papist. This villainous falsehood terrified us even for his personal safety, and Mrs. Thrale and I agreed it was best to leave Bath directly, and travel about the country.

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[1] Mr. Thrale's house in the Borough was in Deadman's Place, Bankside, now called Park Street, Borough Market. When, in 1781, the Brewery was sold, the house was given by Mrs. Thrale to Mrs. Perkins. Johnson wrote his life of Congreve there. (Hill's *Letters of Samuel Johnson*, 1892, ii. 160.)

She left to me the task of acquainting Mr. Thrale with these particulars, being herself too much disturbed to be capable of such a task. I did it as well as I could, and succeeded so far that, by being lightly told of it, he treated it lightly, and bore it with much steadiness and composure. We then soon settled to decamp.

We had no time nor spirits *pour prendre congé* stuff, but determined to call upon the Bowdlers and Miss Cooper. They were all sorry to part, and Miss Cooper, to my equal surprise and pleasure, fairly made a declaration of her passion for me, assuring me she had never before taken so great a fancy to a new acquaintance, and beginning warmly the request I meant to make myself, of continuing our intimacy in town. I am sure I think so highly of her, that I shall be well pleased to attend to this injunction.

From Miss F. Burney to Dr. Burney

Bath, *June* 9, 1780.

My dearest Sir—How are you? where are you? and what is to come next? These are the questions I am dying with anxiety to have daily announced. The accounts from town are so frightful, that I am uneasy, not only for the city at large, but for every individual I know in it. I hope to Heaven that ere you receive this, all will be once more quiet; but till we hear that it is so, I cannot be a moment in peace.

Does this martial law confine you quite to the house? Folks here say that it must, and that no business of any kind can be transacted. Oh, what dreadful times! Yet I rejoice extremely that the opposition members have fared little better than the ministerial. Had such a mob been confirmed friends of either or of any party, I think the nation must have been at their disposal; for, if headed by popular or skilful leaders, who and what could have resisted them?—I mean, if they are as formidable as we are here told.

Dr. Johnson has written to Mrs. Thrale, without even mentioning the existence of this mob; perhaps at this very moment he thinks it "a humbug upon the nation," as George Bodens called the parliament.

A private letter to Bull,[1] the bookseller, brought word this morning that much slaughter has been made by the military among the mob. Never, I am sure, can any set of wretches less deserve quarter or pity; yet it is impossible not to shudder at hearing of their destruction. Nothing less, however, would do; they were too outrageous and powerful for civil power.

But what is it they want? who is going to turn papist? who, indeed, is thinking in an alarming way of religion — this pious mob, and George Gordon excepted?

I am very anxious indeed about our dear Etty. Such disturbance in her neighbourhood I fear must have greatly terrified her; and I am sure she is not in a situation or state of health to bear terror. I have written and begged to hear from her.

All the stage-coaches that come into Bath from London are chalked over with "No Popery," and Dr. Harrington called here just now, and says the same was chalked this morning upon his door, and is scrawled in several places about the town. Wagers have been laid that the popish chapel here will be pulled or burnt down in a few days; but I believe not a word of the matter, nor do I find that anybody is at all alarmed. Bath, indeed, ought to be held sacred as a sanctuary for invalids; and I doubt not but the news of the firing in town will prevent all tumults out of it.

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[1] Bull's Library was on the Parade. Peach, *Historic Houses in Bath*, 1884, ii. 98, says he succeeded to Frederick, and Richardson's brother-in-law, James Leake.

Now, if, after all the intolerable provocation given by the mob, after all the leniency and forbearance of the ministry, and after the shrinking of the minority, we shall by and by hear that this firing was a massacre—will it not be villainous and horrible? And yet as soon as safety is secured—though by this means alone all now agree it can be secured—nothing would less surprise me than to hear the seekers of popularity make this assertion.

Will you, dear sir, beg Charlotte to answer this letter by your directions, and tell me how the world goes? We are sure here of hearing too much or too little. Mr. Grenville says he knows not whether anything can be done to Lord George; and that quite shocks me, as it is certain that, in all equity and common sense, he is either mad enough for Moorfields, or wicked enough for the Tower, and, therefore, that to one of these places he ought to go.

Friday night.—The above I writ this morning, before I recollected this was not post-day, and all is altered here since. The threats I despised were but too well grounded, for, to our utter amazement and consternation, the new Roman Catholic chapel in this town was set on fire at about nine o'clock. It is now burning with a fury that is dreadful, and the house of the priest belonging to it is in flames also. The poor persecuted man himself has, I believe, escaped with life, though pelted, followed, and very ill-used. Mrs. Thrale and I have been walking about with the footmen several times. The whole town is still and orderly. The rioters do their work with great composure, and though there are knots of people in every corner, all execrating the authors of such outrages, nobody dares oppose them. An attempt, indeed, was made, but it was ill-conducted, faintly followed, and soon put an end to by a secret fear of exciting vengeance.

Alas! to what have we all lived!—the poor invalids here will probably lose all chance of life, from terror. Mr. Hay, our apothecary, has been attending the removal of two, who were confined to their beds in the street where the chapel is burning. The Catholics throughout the place are all threatened with destruction, and we met several porters, between ten and eleven at night, privately removing goods, walking on tiptoe, and scarcely breathing.

I firmly believe, by the deliberate villainy with which this riot is conducted, that it will go on in the same desperate way as in town, and only be stopped by the same desperate means. Our plan for going to Bristol is at an end. We are told it would be madness, as there are seven Romish chapels in it; but we are determined upon removing somewhere to-morrow; for why should we, who can go, stay to witness such horrid scenes?

Saturday afternoon, June 10.—I was most cruelly disappointed in not having one word to-day. I am half crazy with doubt and disturbance in not hearing. Everybody here is terrified to death. We have intelligence that Mr. Thrale's house in town[1] is filled with soldiers, and threatened by the mob with destruction. Perhaps he may himself be a marked man for their fury. We are going directly from Bath, and intend to stop only at villages. To-night we shall stop at Warminster, not daring to go to Devizes. This place is now well guarded, but still we dare not await the event of to-night; all the Catholics in the town have privately escaped.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 421.

I know not now when I shall hear from you. I am in agony for news. Our headquarters will be Brighthelmstone,[1] where I do most humbly and fervently entreat you to write—do, dearest sir, write, if but one word—if but only you name YOURSELF! Nothing but your own hand can now tranquillise me. The reports about London here quite distract me. If it were possible to send me a line by the diligence to Brighton,[1] how grateful I should be for such an indulgence! I should then find it there upon our arrival. Charlotte, I am sure, will make it into a sham parcel, and Susy will write for you all but the name. God bless—defend—preserve you! my dearest father. Life is no life to me while I fear for your safety.

God bless and save you all! I shall write to-morrow from wherever we may be,—nay, every day I shall write, for you will all soon be as anxious for news from the country as I have been for it from town. Some infamous villain has put it into the paper here that Mr. Thrale is a papist. This, I suppose, is an Hothamite[2] report, to inflame his constituents.

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[1] Miss Burney, it will be seen, uses both names.

[2] Sir Richard Hotham, by whom Mr. Thrale was defeated at Southwark in the following September. "Mr. Thrale's loss of health has lost him the election," wrote Johnson on October 17 (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iii. 442).

MISS F. BURNEY TO DR. BURNEY

SALISBURY, *June* 11, 1780.

Here we are, dearest sir, and here we mean to pass this night.

We did not leave Bath till eight o'clock yesterday evening, at which time it was filled with dragoons, militia, and armed constables, not armed with muskets, but bludgeons: these latter were all chairmen, who were sworn by the mayor in the morning for petty constables. A popish private chapel, and the houses of all the Catholics, were guarded between seven and eight, and the inhabitants ordered to keep house.

We set out in the coach-and-four, with two men on horseback, and got to Warminster, a small town in Somersetshire, a little before twelve.[1]

This morning two more servants came after us from Bath, and brought us word that the precautions taken by the magistrates last night had had good success, for no attempt of any sort had been renewed towards a riot.

But the happiest tidings to me were contained in a letter which they brought, which had arrived after our departure, by the diligence, from Mr. Perkins, with an account that all was quiet in London, and that Lord G. Gordon was sent to the Tower.

I am now again tolerably easy, but I shall not be really comfortable, or free from some fears, till I hear from St. Martin's Street.

The Borough House has been quite preserved.[2] I know not how long we may be on the road, but nowhere long enough for receiving a letter till we come to Brighthelmstone.

We stopped in our way at Wilton, and spent half the day at that beautiful place.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 426.

[2] See *ante*, p. 421.

Just before we arrived there, Lord Arundel had sent to the officers in the place, to entreat a party of guards immediately, for the safety of his house, as he had intelligence that a mob was on the road from London to attack it:—he is a Catholic. His request was immediately complied with.

We intended to have gone to a private town, but find all quiet here,[1] and, therefore, prefer it as much more commodious. There is no Romish chapel in the town; mass has always been performed for the Catholics of the place at a Mrs. Arundel's in the Close—a relation of his lordship's, whose house is fifteen miles off. I have inquired about the Harris's;[2] I find they are here and all well.

Peace now, I trust, will be restored to the nation—at least as soon as some of the desperate gang that may escape from London in order to spread confusion in the country, are dispersed or overcome.

I will continue to write while matters are in this doubtful state, that you may have no anxiety added to the great stock you must suffer upon my account.

We are all quite well, and when I can once hear you are so, I shall be happy.

Adieu, most dear sir! Love, duty, and compliments to all from your most dutiful and most affectionate,

F. B.

Dr. Burney to Miss F. Burney

1 St. Martin's Street, *Monday Afternoon.*
Your letter just received.

My dear Fanny—We are all safe and well, after our heartaches and terrors. London is now the most secure residence in the kingdom.

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[1] *i.e.* at Salisbury.

[2] The family of James Harris, who lived at Salisbury. See *ante*, p. 86.

I wrote a long letter to our dear Mrs. T. on Friday night, with a kind of detail of the week's transactions. I am now obliged to go out, and shall leave the girls to fill up the rest of the sheet. All is safe and quiet in the Borough. We sent William[1] thither on Saturday. God bless you! All affection and good wishes attend our dear friends.

I said that riot would go into the country, like a new cap, till it was discountenanced and out of fashion in the metropolis. I bless every soldier I see—we have no dependence on any defence from outrage but the military.

MISS CHARLOTTE BURNEY TO MISS F. BURNEY

I am very sorry, my dear Fanny, to hear how much you have suffered from your apprehension about us. Susan will tell you why none of us wrote before Friday; and she says she has told you what dreadful havoc and devastation the mob have made here in all parts of the town. However, we are pretty quiet and tranquil again now. Papa goes on with his business pretty much as usual, and so far from the military keeping people within doors (as you say, in your letter to my father, you suppose to be the case) the streets were never more crowded—everybody is wandering about in order to see the ruins of the places that the mob have destroyed.

There are two camps, one in St. James's, and the other in Hyde Park, which, together with the military law, makes almost every one here think he is safe again. I expect we shall all have "a passion for a scarlet coat" now.

I hardly know what to tell you that won't be stale news. They say that duplicates of the hand-bill that I have enclosed were distributed all over the town on Wednesday and Thursday last; however, thank Heaven, everybody says now that Mr. Thrale's house and brewery are as safe as we can wish them. There was a brewer in Turnstile that had his house gutted and burnt, because, the mob said, "he was a *papish*, and sold popish beer." Did you ever hear of such diabolical ruffians?

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[1] The St. Martin's Street servant. See *ante*, p. 32.

Sister Hetty is vastly well, and has received your letter; I think she has stood the fright better, and been a greater heroine, than any of us.

To add to the pleasantness of our situation, there have been gangs of women going about to rob and plunder. Miss Kirwans[1] went on Friday afternoon to walk in the Museum gardens, and were stopped by a set of women, and robbed of all the money they had. The mob had proscribed the mews, for they said, "The king should not have a horse to ride upon!" They besieged the new Somerset House, with intention to destroy it, but were repulsed by some soldiers placed there for that purpose.

Mr. Sleepe has been here a day or two, and says the folks at Watford, where he comes from, "approve very much of having the Catholic chapels destroyed, for they say it's a shame the pope should come here!" There is a house hereabouts that they had chalked upon last week, "Empty, and No Popery!"

I am heartily rejoiced, my dearest Fanny, that you have got away from Bath, and hope and trust that at Brighthelmstone you will be as safe as we are here.

It sounds almost incredible, but they say, that on Wednesday night last,[2] when the mob were more powerful, more numerous, and outrageous than ever, there was, nevertheless, a number of exceedingly genteel people at Ranelagh, though they knew not but their houses might be on fire at the time!

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[1] These were friends of the Burney household, of whom, beyond the fact, that they were "sweet girls," nothing is known.

[2] "I assure your Ladyship there is no panic. Lady Aylesbury has

God bless you, my dear Fanny,—for Heaven's sake keep up your spirits!—Yours ever, with the greatest affection,

Charlotte Ann Burney.

Mrs. Thrale to Miss F. Burney

Brighton, *Thursday Evening, June* 29, 1780.

Streatham detained me so scandalously late that I never entered Ryegate till 12 o'clock—you know we had calculated for 11. I had, however, the satisfaction of leaving Presto[1] in the arms of a mistress he preferred to me, and he found love an ample recompense for the loss of friendship. All dogs do, I suppose!

At 10 o'clock I saw myself here, and quitted my very riotous companions, to look for their father and sister, who were walking with Miss Owen to the Point. The evening was spent in chat, and this morning I carried a bunch of grapes to Mr. Scrase,[2] who was too ill to swallow one, or to see even me. My master, however, is quite in rosy health—he is, indeed—and jokes Peggy Owen for her want of power to flash. He made many inquiries for you; and was not displeased that I

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been at the play in the Haymarket, and the Duke [of Gloucester] and my four nieces at Ranelagh this evening" (*Wednesday night, past two in the morning, June* 7, 1780—Walpole to Lady Ossory).

[1] Mrs. Thrale's dog. See *ante*, p. 120.

[2] Mrs. Thrale's Mr. Crisp. "Dear Mr. Scrase was an old gouty solicitor, retired from business, friend and contemporary of my husband's father" (*Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi* (*Thrale*), 1861, ii. 27). Mr. Richard Scrase lived in the Manor House (site of the Royal York Hotel) on the Steine. He had helped the Thrales in their distresses of 1771-72 (see *ante*, p. 159), and their residence in Brighton was probably due to him (Bishop's *Brighton in the Olden Time*, 1892, p. 147).

had given Perkins two hundred guineas instead of one[1]—a secret I never durst tell before, not even to Johnson, not even to you—but so it was.

I have no society here, so I might go to work like you, if I had any materials. Susan and Sophy have taken to writing verses—'tis the fashion of the school they say, and Sophy's are the best performances of all the misses, except one monkey of eighteen years old.

Harry C—— is here, and with him a Mr. S——, two poor empty, unmeaning lads from town, who talk of a man being a high treat, etc. They are, I think, the first companions I ever picked up and dismissed, as fairly worse than none.

Ah, my sweet girl! all this stuff written, and not one word of the loss I feel in your leaving me! But, upon my honour, I forbear only to save your fretting, for I do think you would vex if you saw how silly I looked about for you ever since I came home. I shall now say, as Johnson does, "Ah, Burney! if you loved me, etc. etc." But no more of what must be missed and must not be mourned. —Yours, H. L. T.

Miss F. Burney to Mrs. Thrale

Saturday, July 1, 1780.

Have you no "quality" yet, my dearest madam, that letters are three days upon the road! I have only this instant received yours, though you were so kindly indulgent to my request of writing the next day after your journey. I rejoice, indeed, that you found my master so well. I daresay Queeny had kept him sharp. What does he think of Dr. Johnson's dieting scheme? I must confess that if, like Mrs. Tattersall, he should consent to adopt the *w*egetable system, I should be as unwilling as her husband to be a good beefsteak in his way!

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[1] Mr. Perkins, Thrale's superintendent, had been instrumental in saving the Southwark or Borough House from the Gordon rioters.

Your liberality to Perkins charms me; and so does Mr. Thrale's approbation of it; for his being not displeased implies nothing short of approbation. I am sorry for Miss Owen,[1] but I much hope you will be able to revive and comfort her: sure I am that if spirit can reanimate, or sweetness can soothe her, she will not be long in so forlorn a way.

Your account of Miss M——'s being taken in, and taken in by Captain B——,[2] astonishes me! surely not half we have heard either of her adorers, or her talents, can have been true. Mrs. Byron has lost too little to have anything to lament, except, indeed, the time she sacrificed to foolish conversation, and the civilities she threw away upon so worthless a subject. Augusta has nothing to reproach herself with, and riches and wisdom must be rare indeed, if she fares not as well with respect to both, as she would have done with an adventurer whose pocket, it seems, was as empty as his head.

Nothing here is talked of but the trial of the rioters: most people among those who are able to appear as witnesses, are so fearful of incurring the future resentment of the mob, that evidence is very difficult to be obtained, even where guilt is undoubted: by this means numbers are daily discharged who have offended against all laws, though they can be punished by none. I am glad, however, to see the moderation of those who might now, perhaps, extirpate all power but their own; for neither art nor authority is used to blacken the crimes of the accused, or force into light the designs of the suspected. Nothing has yet appeared that indicates any plot, except for general plunder, nor have any of the conspirators, who have yet been examined, seemed to have confederated for any deeper purpose than to drink hard, shout loud, and make their betters houseless as themselves.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 431. Miss Owen is mentioned as visiting with Mrs. Thrale at St. Martin's Street in 1777 (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 153).

[2] Brisbane, no doubt, from the subsequent references to Augusta Byron (see *ante*, p. 408).

I have seen Pacchierotti, and he has sung to me as sweetly, and complimented me as liberally, as ears the most fastidious, and a mind the most vain, could desire; yet not the less have I thought of or regretted my ever dear, ever kind, and most sweet Mrs. Thrale! But, as I am come, after many absences, to a family so deservedly beloved by me, I am determined neither to sour my friends nor myself, by encouraging a repining spirit, but now to be happy as I can with them, and hope, ere long, to be again so with you; for, with affection more sincere, and a heart more true, nobody can love my dear Mrs. Thrale more fervently and faithfully than her ever devoted F. BURNEY.[1]

My love and duty to my master: and love, without the duty, to Miss Thrale; and my best compliments to Miss Owen.

We shall go to Chessington as soon as the trials are over and the town is quiet.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MRS. THRALE

Saturday, July 8, 1780.

See but, dearest madam, my prompt obedience, by this brown and rough-edged mark of it. Your sweet letter I have but this moment received, so I think the quality use you very ill, or rather me, for I have made a wry face at the postman's knock, without a letter from Brighton, this day or two.

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[1] This is a mild example of what, in *Humphry Clinker*, Landor called the fashionable "rigmarole." "By rigmarole I mean such a termination as this :—'It had like to have kindled the flames of discord in the family of yours always, etc.'" (Forster's *Walter Savage Landor*, 1876, p. 499). The passed master of this valuable art was Wilkins Micawber.

You give me nothing but good news about my master, and that delights me very sincerely; but I can see that you are not quite comfortable yourself. Why have you this cold and headache? Have you gone imprudently into the sea—I mean without taking counsel with nurse Tibson? You know we long since settled, that whenever you were ill all your friends would impute it to bathing; so this doubt will not surprise, though ten to one but it provokes you.

I have not seen Dr. Johnson since the day you left me, when he came hither, and met Mrs. Ord, Mr. Hoole,[1] Mrs. Reynolds, Baretti, the Paradises, Pepys, Castles, Dr. Dunbar, and some others; and then he was in high spirits and good humour, talked all the talk, affronted nobody, and delighted everybody. I never saw him more sweet, nor better attended to by his audience. I have not been able to wait upon him since, nor, indeed, upon anybody, for we have not spent one evening alone since my return.

Pacchierotti left London yesterday morning. We all miss him much, myself particularly, because, for all Dr. Johnson, he is not only the first, most finished, and most delightful of singers, but an amiable, rational, and intelligent creature, who has given to himself a literary education, and who has not only a mind superior to his own profession, which he never names but with regret, in spite of the excellence to which he has risen, but he has also, I will venture to say, talents and an understanding that would have fitted him for almost any other, had they, instead of being crushed under every possible disadvantage, been encouraged and improved. Had you seen as much of him as I have done, I think, in defiance of prejudice, you would be of the same opinion.

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[1] John Hoole, 1727-1803, at this date the translator of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, 1763, but not yet of Ariosto. He was a friend of Johnson.

I am quite disappointed with respect to Miss Owen. I had hoped she would have been more comfortable to you. Mr. Scrase, too!—indeed your account of your society grieves me. Sickness, spleen, or folly seem to compose it; and if you, who have so much facility in making new acquaintance, find them so insupportable, it is, I am sure, that they must be impenetrable blockheads!

Sir John Bounce's[1] apology for not having signalised himself more gloriously in public life, made me laugh very heartily. Do you hear anything of my general, his case, or his monkey, or the lost calves of his legs?[2] As one of your true ancient swaggerers, Brighthelmstone seems to have a fair and natural right to him.

Mrs. Montagu has been in town. I heard this from Mrs. Ord, who had an appointment to meet her at her new house, and was invited to a *conversazione* with her at Mr. Pepys'.

I have no private intelligence to give about the rioters, or Lord George, save that I am informed he is certainly to be tried for high treason, not for a misdemeanour. Are you not rejoiced at the sequel of good news from America?

The soldiers are drawn off gently, but daily, from all parts of the metropolis. The camps in the parks are, however, expected to remain all summer. Poor Captain Clerke is dead! I was willing to doubt it as long as possible, but it has been confirmed to my father by Lord Sandwich.

We have no consolation from Admiral Jem's promotion, for the first-lieutenant of the late Captain Cook's ship has succeeded to the command of Captain Clerke's.[1] Is it not a melancholy circumstance that both the captains of this expedition should perish ere it is completed? Lord Sandwich told my father that the journal of Captain Cook is arrived, and now in the hands of the king, who has desired to have the first perusal of it. I am very impatient to know something of its contents. The ships are both expected almost daily. They have already been out a year longer than was intended. Mr. Jem has not written one line. Don't you think my master will allow him to be a man of sense, and take to him?

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[1] Query—Sir John Shelley. See *ante*, p. 287.

[2] See *ante*, p. 300, *et seq.*

Adieu, my dearest madam! I hope I have used you ill enough, with regard to paper, to satisfy your desire, and convince you of the true affection of your faithful and much obliged F. B.

My best respects to Mr. and Miss Thrale.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MRS. THRALE

Nobody does write such sweet letters as my dear Mrs. Thrale, and I would sooner give up a month's allowance of meat, than my week's allowance of an epistle.

The report of the Parliament's dissolution I hope is premature. I inquire of everybody I see about it, and always hear that it is expected now to last almost as long as it can last. Why, indeed, should government wish to dissolve it, when they meet with no opposition from it?

Since I wrote last I have drunk tea with Dr. Johnson. My father took me to Bolt Court, and we found him, most fortunately, with only one brass-headed cane gentleman. Since that, I have had the pleasure to meet him again at Mrs. Reynolds's, when he offered to take me with him to Grub Street, to see the ruins of the house demolished there in the late riots, by a mob that, as he observed, could be no friend to the Muses! He inquired if I had ever yet visited Grub Street? but was obliged to restrain his anger when I answered "No," because he acknowledged he had never paid his respects to it himself.[1] "However," says he, "you and I, Burney, will go together; we have a very good right to go, so we'll visit the mansions of our progenitors, and take up our own freedom together."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 317.

There's for you, madam! What can be grander? The loss of *Timoleon*[2] is really terrible; yet, as it is an incident that will probably dwell no little time upon the author's mind, who knows but it may be productive of another tragedy, in which a dearth of story will not merely be no fault of his, but no misfortune?

I have no intelligence to give about the Dean of Coleraine, but that we are now in daily expectation of hearing of his arrival.

Yesterday I drank tea at Sir Joshua's, and met by accident with Mrs. Cholmondeley; I was very glad to find that her spirits are uninjured by her misfortunes; she was as gay, flighty, entertaining and frisky as ever. Her *sposo* is not confined, as was said; he is only gone upon his travels: she seems to bear his absence with remarkable fortitude. After all, there is something in her very attractive; her conversation is so spirited, so humorous, so enlivening, that she does not suffer one's attention to rest, much less to flag, for hours together.

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[1] And this notwithstanding that he had defined it memorably in the *Dictionary*:—"Originally the name of a street near Moorfields in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *grubstreet*." Nor does it appear that he ever went there afterwards, though in 1783 he proposed to Hoole to "eat a beefsteak in Grub Street."

[2] See *ante*, p. 361.

Sir Joshua told me he was now at work upon your pictures, touching them up for Streatham, and that he has already ordered the frames, and shall have them quite ready whenever the house is in order for them.

I also met at his house Mr. W. Burke,[1] and young Burke, the orator's son, who is made much-ado about, but I saw not enough of him to know why.[2]

We are all here very truly concerned for Mr. Chamier, who you know is a very great favourite among us. He is very ill, and thinks himself in a decline. He is now at Bath, and writes my father word he has made up his mind, come what may.[3]

Your good news of my master glads me, however, beyond what good news of almost any other man in the world could do. Pray give him my best respects, and beg him not to forget me so much as to look strange upon me when we next meet; if he does it won't be fair, for I feel that I shall look very kind upon him.

I fancy Miss Thrale is quite too difficult; why, bless me, by "something happening" I never meant to wait for a murder, nor a wedding, no nor an invasion, nor an insurrection; any other bore will do as well. My father charges me to give you his kindest love, and not daintify his affection into respects or compliments.

Adieu, dearest madam, and from me accept not only love, and not only respects, but both, and gratitude, and warmest wishes, and constancy invariable into the bargain. F. BURNEY.

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[1] Burke's kinsman, M.P. for Bedwin, Wiltshire.

[2] See *post*, p. 441.

[3] Mr. Chamier died October 12, 1780.

I am very glad Mr. Tidy is so good. Thank him for me, and tell him I am glad he keeps my place open; and pray give Dr. Delap my compliments. Has he settled yet how he shall dress the candle snuffers the first night? I would by no means have the minutest directions omitted.

From Mrs. Thrale to Miss F. Burney

Brighthelmstone, *Wednesday, July* 19, 1780.

And so my letters please you, do they, my sweet Burney? I know yours are the most entertaining things that cross me in the course of the whole week; and a miserable praise too, if you could figure to yourself my most dull companions. I write now from Bowen's shop,[1] where he has been settled about three days I think; and here comes in one man hopping, and asks for *Russell on Sea-water* [2]—another tripping, and begs to have the last new novel sent him home to-night; one lady tumbles the ballads about, and fingers the harpsichord which stands here at every blockhead's mercy; and another looks over the lilliputian library, and purchases Polly Sugarcake for her long-legged missey.

My master is gone out riding, and we are to drink tea with Lady Rothes; after which the Steyne hours begin, and we cluster round Thomas's shop,[3] and contend for the attention of Lord John Clinton, a man who could, I think, be of consequence in no other place upon earth, though a very well-informed and modest-mannered boy. Dr. Pepys is resolutely and profoundly silent; and Lady Shelley,[4] having heard wits commended, has taken up a new character, and says not only the severest but the cruellest things you ever heard in your life. Here is a Mrs. K——, too, sister to the Duchess of M——, who is very uncompanionable indeed, and talks of *Tum*bridge. These, however, are literally all the people we ever speak to—oh yes, the Drummonds—but they are scarce blest with utterance.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 281.

[2] Dr. Richard Russell, 1687-1759, a great Brighton notability. His *Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water*, etc., was published in 1750.

[3] See *ante*, p. 281.

[4] See *ante*, p. 287.

Mr. Scrase mends, and I spent an hour with him to-day. Now have I fairly done with Brighthelmstone, and will congratulate myself on being quite of your advice—as Pacchierotti would call it—concerning Burke, the minor, whom I once met and could make nothing of.

Poor Mr. Chamier! and poor Dr. Burney, too! The loss of real friends after a certain time of life is a terrible thing, let Dr. Johnson say what he will. Those who are first called do not get first home. I remember Chamier lamenting for Mr. Thrale, who will now, I verily think, live to see many of those go before him who expected to stay long after. He will not surely look strange upon you, for he is glad to see your letters; though he does not sigh over them so dismally as he did yesterday, over one he saw I had directed to Chid.

Lord George Gordon is to be liberated upon bail, his quality brethren tell me. To this, I think, contrary to the general disposition of the people, who appear to wish his punishment. But the thunder-cloud always moves against the wind, you know.

The going to Grub Street would have been a pretty exploit. Are you continuing to qualify yourself for an inhabitant?

Sweet Mrs. Cholmondeley! I am glad she can frolic and frisk so:—the time will come too soon, that will, as Grumio expresses it, "tame man, woman, and beast,"—and thyself, fellow Curtis.[1]

The players this year are rather better than the last; but the theatre is no bigger than a band-box, which is a proper precaution, I think, as here are not folks to fill even that. The shops are almost all shut still, and a dearth of money complained of that is lamentable; but we have taken some Spanish ships, it seems, and La Vera Cruz besides.

Adieu,—and divide my truest kindness among all the dear Newtonians,[2] and keep yourself a large share. You are in no danger of invaders from the sea-coast. Susan and Sophy bathe and grow, and riot me out of my senses. I am ever, my dear girl, most faithfully yours, H. L. T.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MRS. THRALE

August 16.

I return you my most hearty thanks, my dear madam, for your last most comfortable tidings, which, as they have removed all my fears, shall, for the present, banish their subject. I will never be melancholic, even though it were recommended to be lady as well as "gentlemanlike," but when perforce I cannot help it; for in good truth that method of varying the mode of existence offers itself with so kind a readiness of its own accord, that a very little patience, and a very little feeling, will bring in supplies, fresh and fresh, of that sort of food, which, with a very moderate economy of anxiety, will lay by for croaking moments stores inexhaustible. Indeed, though I have so often heard lamentations of the scarcity of every other commodity, useful or ornamental, intellectual or sensual, I never once, even from the most greedy devourer of sadness, have heard the remotest hint, that *de quoi manger* was in danger of being wanted for the gluttons of evil and misery; for though eating but makes their appetite the stronger, their materials are as little diminished by voracity as their hunger.

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[1] *Taming of the Shrew*, Act. IV. Sc. i.—a variation of Grumio's words to his fellow-servant, Curtis.

[2] Dr. Burney, it will be remembered, was at this time residing in Newton's old house (see *ante*, p. 102).

Well—*mal à propos* to all this,—Dr. Johnson, who expects nothing but what is good, and swallows nothing but what he likes, has delighted me with another volume of his *Lives*,—that which contains Blackmore, Congreve, etc., which he tells me you have had.[1] Oh what a writer he is! what instruction, spirit, intelligence, and vigour in almost every paragraph! Addison I think equal to any in the former batch; but he is rather too hard upon Prior, and makes Gay, I think, too insignificant. Some of the little poems of Prior seem to me as charming as any little poems can be; and Gay's pastorals I had hoped to have seen praised more liberally.

At length, I have seen the S. S. She has been again in town, and was so good as to make us a very long visit. She looked as beautiful as an angel, though rather pale, but was in very high spirits, and I thought her more attractive and engaging than ever. So I believe did my father.—Ah! "littel cunning woman," if you were to put your wicked scheme in practice, I see how it would take.

We are to go to Chessington next week; so I suppose there we shall be when you quit Brighton. If so, pray tell my dear master I insist upon his keeping his promise of coming thither; if not, I won't hold myself in readiness to go to Italy—no, not if Farinelli were in his prime. But do come, dearest madam, and do make him: you know he always does as you bid him, so you have but to issue your commands. 'Tis a charming thing to keep a husband in such order. A thousand loves from all here, but mostly, being spokeswoman, I have a right to say that, from yours,

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[1] Dr. Johnson "dispatched" the life of Congreve between May 9 and May 25, 1780. He sent two volumes of the *Lives* to Mrs. Thrale in July. The last six volumes were published in 1781 (Hill's *Letters of Johnson*, 1892, p. 154, 160, and 189).

F. B.

Journal resumed

Streatham, Monday, December 6.—As I am now well enough to employ myself my own way, though not to go downstairs, I will take this first opportunity I have had since my return hither, to write again to my dearest Susan.

Your letters, my love, have been more than usually welcome to me of late; their contents have been very entertaining and satisfactory, and their arrival has been particularly seasonable; not on account of my illness—that alone never yet lowered my spirits as they are now lowered, because I knew I must ere long, in all probability, be again well; but oh, Susy! I am—I have been—and I fear must always be, alarmed indeed for Mr. Thrale; and the more I see and know him, the more alarmed, because the more I love and dread to lose him.

I am not much in cue for journalising; but I am yet less inclined for anything else. As writing to my own Susy commonly lightens my heart, so I'll e'en set about recollecting the good as well as bad that has passed since I wrote last; for else I were too selfish.

I cannot remember where I left off;—but to go back to the last few days we spent at Brighthelmstone—I must tell you that on the last Friday—but I cannot recollect anecdotes, nor write them if

I did; and so I will only draw up an exit for the characters to which I had endeavoured to introduce you.

Lady Hesketh[1] made us a very long, sociable, and friendly visit before our departure, in which she appeared to much advantage, with respect to conversation, abilities, and good breeding. I saw that she became quite enchanted with Mrs. Thrale, and she made me talk away with her very copiously, by looking at me, in a former visit, when she was remarking that nothing was so formidable as to be in company with silent observers; whereupon I gathered courage, and boldly entered the lists; and her ladyship has inquired my direction of Mrs. Thrale, and told her that the acquaintance should not drop at Brighton, for she was determined to wait upon me in town.

We saw, latterly, a great deal of the H——s. The Colonel—for he has given up his majorship in the militia, and is raising a company for himself—appeared to us just as before,—sensible, good-humoured, and pleasant; and just as before also his lady—tittle-tattling, monotonous, and tiresome.

[They had a Miss Cooke with them,—whom I only mention, because her name was also Kitty, and because her resemblance to our Kitty did not stop there, for she was always gay, and always good-humoured.]

Lady Shelley[2] was as civil to me as Lady Hesketh. Indeed I have good reason to like Sussex. As my cold prevented my waiting upon her with Mrs. Thrale, to take leave, she was so good as to come to me. I am rather sorry she never comes to town, for she is a sweet woman, and very handsome.

[Miss Benson called upon us several times, and

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[1] Harriet, Lady Hesketh, 1733-1807, cousin and friend of Cowper.

[2] See *ante*, p. 440.

I abide exactly by what I have already said of her.]

Dr. Delap was with us till the Friday night preceding our departure; he has asked me, in his unaccountable way, "If I will make him a dish of tea in St. Martin's Street?"

We had also made an acquaintance with a Miss Stow, that I have never had time to mention: a little girl she is, just seven years old, and plays on the harpsichord so well, that she made me very fond of her. She lived with a mother and aunt, neither of whom I liked; but she expressed so much desire to see Dr. Burney, and is so clever, and forward, and ingenious a child, that I could not forbear giving her my direction in town, which she received very gladly, and will, I am sure, find me out as soon as she leaves Brighton.

[Miss Thrale and I paid visits of *congé* to Mrs. Chamier and Miss Emily Jess.

We went together, also,] to Miss Byron; but she was invisible with this influenza:—the mother, however, admitted us, and spent almost the whole two hours she kept us in exhorting me most kindly to visit her, and promising to introduce me to the Admiral,—which I find is a great thing, as he always avoids seeing any of her female friends, even Mrs. Thrale, from some odd peculiarity of disposition.

On Monday, at our last dinner, we had Mr. Tidy, Mr. B——, and Mr. Selwin; and in the evening came Mrs. Byron.

Mr. Tidy I liked better and better; he reminded me of Mr. Crisp; he has not so good a face, but it is that sort of face, and his laugh is the very same: for it first puts every feature in comical motion, and then fairly shakes his whole frame, so that there are tokens of thorough enjoyment from head to foot. He and I should have been very good friends, I am sure, if we had seen much of each other;—as it was, we were both upon the watch, drolly enough.

Mr. B——, though, till very lately, I have almost lived upon him, I shall not bore you with more than naming; for I find you make no defence to my hint of having given you too much of him, and I am at least glad you are so sincere.

And now, my dear Susy, to tragedy—for all I have yet writ is farce to what I must now add; but I will be brief, for your sake as well as my own.

Poor Mr. Thrale had had this vile influenza for two days before we set out; but then seemed better. We got on to Crawley all well; he then ordered two of the servants to go on to Reigate and prepare dinner: meantime he suffered dreadfully from the coldness of the weather; he shook from head to foot, and his teeth chattered aloud very frightfully. When we got again into the coach, by degrees he grew warm and tolerably comfortable; but when we stopped at Reigate his speech grew inarticulate, and he said one word for another. I hoped it was accident, and Mrs. Thrale, by some strange infatuation, thought he was joking, —but Miss Thrale saw how it was from the first.

By very cruel ill-luck, too tedious to relate, his precaution proved useless; for we had not only no dinner ready, but no fire, and were shown into a large and comfortless room. The town is filled with militia. Here the cold returned dreadfully,—and here, in short, it was but too plain to all, his faculties were lost by it. Poor Mrs. Thrale worked like a servant: she lighted the fire with her own hands,—took the bellows, and made such a one as might have roasted an ox in ten minutes. But I will not dwell on particulars:—after dinner Mr. Thrale grew better; and for the rest of our journey was sleepy and mostly silent.

It was late in the night when we got to Streatham. Mrs. Thrale consulted me what to do:—I was for a physician immediately; but Miss Thrale opposed that, thinking it would do harm to alarm her father by such a step. However, Mrs. Thrale ordered the butler to set off by six the next morning for Dr. Heberden and Mr. Seward.

The next morning, however, he was greatly better, and when they arrived he was very angry; but I am sure it was right. Dr. Heberden ordered nothing but cupping. Mr. Seward was very good and friendly, and spent five days here, during all which Mr. Thrale grew better. Dr. Johnson, you know, came with my dear father the Thursday after our return.

You cannot, I think, have been surprised that I gave up my plan of going to town immediately: indeed I had no heart to leave either Mr. Thrale in a state so precarious, or his dear wife in an agitation of mind hardly short of a fever.

Things now went on tolerably smooth, and Miss Thrale and I renewed our Latin exercises with Dr. Johnson, and with great *éclat* of praise. At another time I could have written much of him and of Mr. Seward, for many very good conversations past; but now I have almost forgot all about them.

The Tuesday following I received your kind letter, and instances to return on Thursday with my father,—but I determined to take no measures either way till I saw how matters went at the last.

The next day I was far from well, as my dear father must have told you,—and I got worse and worse, and I could not go down to dinner; but in the evening, being rather better, I just popt down to play one rubber with dear Mr. Thrale, whose health I have truly at heart, and who is only to be kept from a heavy and profound sleep by cards: and then I was glad to come back, being again worse :—but let me add, I had insisted on performing this feat.

I had a miserable night,—I kept my bed all day, and my ever sweet Mrs. Thrale nursed me most tenderly, letting me take nothing but from herself.

I will say no more about the illness, but that it was short, though rather violent. On Saturday, as I got into Mrs. Thrale's dressing-room to dinner, Dr. Johnson visited me. On Sunday, Mr. Murphy came to dinner; and in the evening begged that he might be admitted to ask me how I did. I was rather bundled up, to be sure, with cloaks, etc., but could not well refuse; so he and Mr. Thrale, lady and daughter, all came together.

He appeared in high flash; took my hand, and insisted on kissing it; and then he entered into a mighty gay, lively, droll, and agreeable conversation,—running on in flighty compliments, highly seasoned with wit, till he diverted and put us all into spirits. But Mrs. Thrale, who was fearful I should be fatigued, found no little difficulty to get him away; he vowed he would not go,—said she might, and all of them, but for his part, he desired not to budge,—and, at last, when by repeated remonstrances he was made retreat, he vowed he would come again.

As soon as their tea was over below stairs, Dr. Johnson came to make me a visit, and while he was with me, I heard Mr. Murphy's step about the adjoining rooms, not knowing well his way; and soon after in he bolted, crying out, "They would fain have stopped me, but here I am!"

However, I have no time to write what passed, except that he vowed when he came next he would read the rest of my play. However, I shall bring it with me to town, and hide it.

The next day, Monday, he left us; and Lady Ladd came. She sat upstairs with me the whole morning, and she has been saying such shocking things of her apprehensions for my dear Mr. Thrale, that they have quite overset me, being already weaker by the fever: and just now, unluckily, Mrs. Thrale came in suddenly, and found me in so low-spirited a situation that she insisted on knowing the cause. I could not tell her, but hinted that Lady L., who was just gone down, had been talking dismally, and she immediately concluded it was concerning Sir John. I am sure she wondered at my prodigious susceptibility, as she well might; but I preferred passing for half an idiot to telling her what I cannot even tell you of Lady L.'s shocking and terrifying speeches.

Miss F. Burney to Dr. Burney

Streatham, *Saturday Morning, 2 o'clock.*

My dearest Sir — We have this moment finished the *Critic.*[1] I have been extremely well entertained with it indeed. The first act seems as full of wit, satire, and spirit as it is of lines. For the rest, I have not sufficiently attended to the plays of these degenerate days to half enjoy or understand the censure or ridicule meant to be lavished on them. However, I could take in enough to be greatly diverted at the flighty absurdities, so well, though so severely pointed out.

Our dear master came home to-day quite as well as you saw him yesterday. He is in good spirits and good humour, but I think he looks sadly. So does our Mrs. T., who agitates herself into an almost perpetual fever.

Adieu, my dearest sir: a thousand thanks for this treat. Dr. Johnson is very gay and sociable and comfortable, and quite as kind to me as ever; and he says, the Bodleian librarian has but done his duty,[1] and that when he goes to Oxford, he will write my name in the books, and my age when I writ them, and sign the whole with his own; "and then," he says, "the world may know that we

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[1] Sheridan's *Critic*, printed at this time, but unpublished [*Mrs. Barrett's note*].

> "So mixed our studies, and so joined our fame.[2]

For we shall go down hand in hand to posterity!"

Mrs. T. sends her best love. I don't know when I can leave her, but not, unless you desire it, till Mr. T. seems better established in health, or till Mrs. Davenant can come hither.

Mr. Seward is now here. Once more, dearest sir, good-night—says your dutiful and most affectionate F. B.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MRS. THRALE

CHESSINGTON, *Nov.* 4.

I never managed matters so adroitly before. Here I am already. My brother most good-naturedly offered to convoy me immediately; my father consented; and the murmuring of the rest, though "more comfortable to me than the buzzing of hornets and wasps," was yet of no avail to retard me. I was sorry indeed to leave them all so soon, but as my six weeks here were destined and promised, it is better to have them over before I pretend to be settled at home—at either home, may I say?

As I spent only one day in town, I gave it wholly to my sisters, and they to me; and in the morning we had by chance such a meeting as we have not had before for very many years. My two brothers, Susan, and Charlotte, and myself, were of course at home, and Hetty accidentally coming to town, called in while we were all at breakfast. I ran upstairs, and dragged my father down out of the study, to see once more all together his original progeny, and when he came, he called out "Offspring! can you dance?"[1]

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[1] The Bodleian librarian had placed *Evelina* in his noble library, to the author's astonished delight [*Note by F. B.*].

[2] Pope's *Epistle to Jervas*, 1727, line 9. Pope writes the last word "name."

We were soon, however, again dispersed; but the evening also was concluded with equal demonstrations of joy. My mother happened to be engaged to the Kirwans, and Charles, Susan, Charlotte and I were not very dolefully drinking our tea, when the parlour door was opened, and in entered Pacchierotti, who stayed all the evening. Again we flew to the study, and again hauled down my father, and I believe I need hardly tell you the time hung not very heavily upon our hands.

Pacchierotti inquired very much after "my so great favourite Mrs. Thrale." He is much more embarrassed in speaking English than he was, but understands it more readily and perfectly than ever. He sung to us one air from *Ezio*,[2] and his voice is more clear and sweet than I ever heard it before. I made but little inquiry about the opera, as I was running away from it, and wanted not to be tempted to stay. My father invited him in your name to Streatham, but I charged him by no means to go in my absence. Little Bertoni was with him.[3]

I had no other adventure in London, but a most delightful incident has happened since I came hither. We had just done tea on Friday, and Mrs. Hamilton, Kitty, Jem, and Mr. Crisp, were sitting down to cards, when we were surprised by an express from London, and it brought a

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[1] See *post*, Miss Burney to Mrs. Phillips, March 19, 1782.

[2] An opera by Metastasio, 1728.

[3] Probably a son of the composer. See *ante*, p. 155.

"Whereas we think fit" from the Admiralty, to appoint Captain Burney to the command of the *Latona*, during the absence of the Honourable Captain Conway. This is one of the best frigates in the navy, of thirty-eight guns, and immediately, I believe, ready for service. Jem was almost frantic with ecstasy of joy; he sang, laughed, drank to his own success, and danced about the room with Miss Kitty till he put her quite out of breath. His hope is to get out immediately, and have a brush with some of the Dons, Monsieurs, or Mynheers, while he is in possession of a ship of sufficient force to attack any frigate he may meet.

Adieu, dearest madam. I know you will approve my manœuvre in so quickly getting here, because so much the sooner again at Streatham you will see your F. B.

This moment enters our parson with your letter. How kind of you to write even before you received my scrawl from St. Martin's Street! We had heard nothing of any earthquake when I came away. Have you heard from Lyons?

Miss F. Burney to Mrs. Thrale

St. Martin's Street, *Dec.* 14.

Three days only have I left dear Streatham, and I feel as if I had neither seen or heard of it as many months. Gratify me, dearest madam, with a few lines to tell me how you all do, for I am half uneasy, and quite impatient for intelligence. Does the card system flourish?—Does Dr. Johnson continue gay and good-humoured, and "valuing nobody" in a morning?—Is Miss Thrale steady in asserting that all will do perfectly well?—But most I wish to hear whether our dear master is any better in spirit?—And whether my sweet Dottoressa perseveres in supporting and exerting her own?

I never returned to my own home so little merrily disposed as this last time. When I parted with my master, I wished much to have thanked him for all the kindness he has so constantly shown me, but I found myself too grave for the purpose; however, I meant, when I parted with you, to make myself amends by making a speech long enough for both; but then I was yet less able; and thus it is that some or other cross accident for ever frustrates my rhetorical designs.

Adieu, my dearest madam. Pray give my affectionate respects to Mr. Thrale and Dr. Johnson, my love to Miss Thrale, and compliments to your doves,—and pray believe me, ever and ever,

F. B.

Mrs. Thrale to Miss F. Burney

Streatham, *Dec.* 22, 1780.

My lovely Burney will believe that I have lost the use of my fingers, or that I never employ them in writing to her but when they are shaking with agony. The truth is, all goes well, and so I quiet my mind and quarrel with my maids—for one must have something to do.

Now I have picked up something to please you; Dr. Johnson pronounced an actual eulogium upon Captain Burney, to his yesterday's listeners—how amiable he was, and how gentle in his manner, etc., tho' he had lived so many years with sailors and savages.

This I know is a good thing; the only bad part is, that my good word will now be of less importance to him, and I had a great mind to court him out of a share of his good opinion and kindness: but I'll try at it yet whenever I come to town.

Dr. Burney brought my master a nice companion t'other morning ; he was quite happy, and applauded her schemes of education—just like a man who never heard how the former ones succeeded. I thought like old Croaker—heaven send us all the better for them this time three years![1]

What a noodle I was to get no franks for Chessington! and now all the members are dispersed over the globe, till the hanging Lord George Gordon shall call them together again : he is to be hanged sure enough.

Sir R. Jebb is leaving us, just in the manner of a hen who is quitting her chickens—he leaves us by degrees, and makes long intervals now, short visits, etc. Dear creature, how I adore him! and what praises have I coaxed Mrs. Montagu out of to please him. He'll value those more than mine —a rogue!

The Parkers were here yesterday, and sate whole hours, and told all their terrors in the riot season, etc., besides an adventure of a trunk cut from behind a post-chaise, which lasted—— Oh, I thought I should have died no other death than that trunk would have given me.

I suppose you gather from all this that Mr. Thrale dines below, plays at cards, etc., for so he does, and makes all the haste to be well that mortal man can make.

Tell Mr. Crisp that your friend is a whimsical animal enough, but that she loves her friends, and her friends' friends, and him of course : and tell the Captain that I had a lady here last Saturday, and could think of nothing for chat so well as the discoveries in the South Seas, and his kindness in giving Hester some rarities from thence, which she produced—that the lady made the following reflection on what she saw and heard—"Why, madam," said she, "I have been thinking all this while how happy a thing it is that when some parts of the world wear out and go to decay, Captain Burney should find out new ones to supply their places, and serve instead." All this with perfect innocence of all meaning whatsoever.

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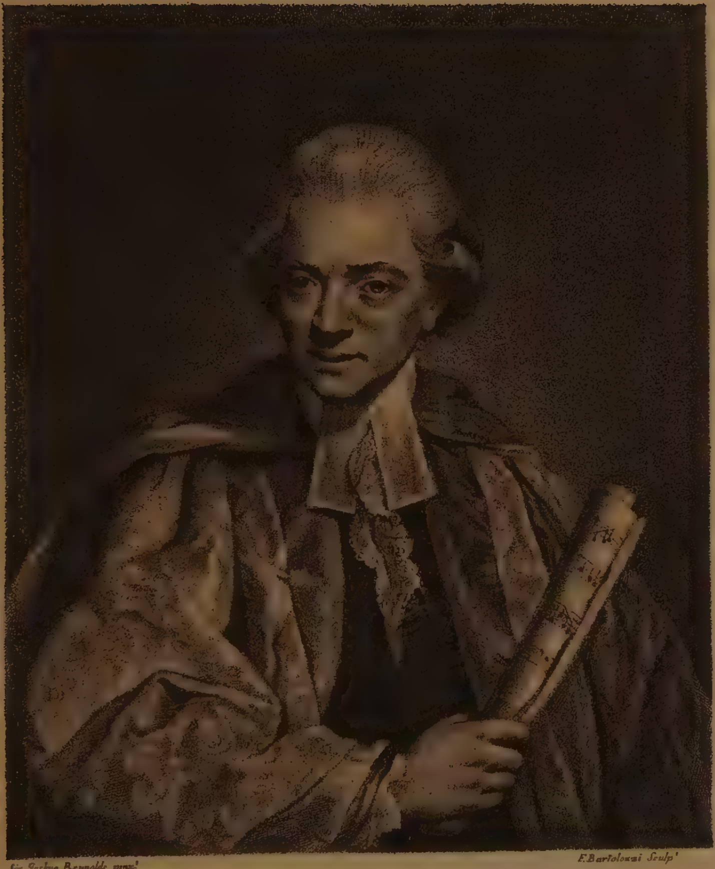
[1] An untextual quotation from Act I. of Goldsmith's *Good-Natur'd Man.*

Adieu, dearest, loveliest Burney! Write to me kindly, think of me partially, come to me willingly, and dream of me if you will; for I am, as you well know, ever yours, H. L. T.



Sir Joshua Reynolds pinx^{t}

F. Bartolozzi Sculp^{t}

Dr. Burney
from a print by Bartolozzi
after Reynolds

Emery Walker Ph. Sc.

PART X

1781

Correspondence between Miss Burney and Mrs. Thrale—Merlin—His mill to grind old ladies young—Dr. Johnson—Bartolozzi—An Owhyhee dress—Conversazione—Characters—Mrs. Montagu—Dinner at Mrs. Thrale's—Lord Sheffield—Lord John Clinton—Two beauties and a fright—Mrs. Carter—Webber's South Sea drawings—Curious fans—The Duchess of Devonshire—Sir Joshua Reynolds—A dinner party—A character—Sudden death of Mr. Thrale—Correspondence between Mr. Crisp and Miss Burney—*The Three Warnings*—Diary resumed—Visitors—Misconceptions—A dinner party—A quarrel—Perseverance and obstinacy—Reconciliation—Sale of Mr. Thrale's brewery—Mr. Barclay, the rich Quaker—Dr. Johnson—Newspaper scandal—A poor artist—An odd adventure—Anecdote of Dr. Johnson—Sitting for one's portrait—Visit to Streatham—A subject for Harry Bunbury—The wits at war—Johnson's *Life of Lord Lyttelton*—Singular scene—Johnson in a savage fit—A peace-maker—Merlin, the mechanician.

MRS. THRALE TO MISS F. BURNEY

STREATHAM, *Thursday, January* 4.

DON'T I pick up franks prettily? I sent a hundred miles for this, and the churl enclosed but one—"certain that Miss Burney could not live long enough away from me to need two." Ah, cruel Miss Burney! she will never come again, I think.

Well! but I did see Phillips written in that young man's honest face, though nobody pronounced the word; and I boldly bid him "*Good morrow, Captain,*" at the door, trusting to my own instinct when I came away. Your sweet father, however, this day trusted me with the whole secret, and from my heart do I wish every comfort and joy from the match.[1]

'Tis now high time to tell you that the pictures are come home, all but *mine*,—which my master don't like.[2] He has *ordered* your father to sit to-morrow, in his peremptory way;[3] and I shall have the dear Doctor every morning at breakfast. I took ridiculous pains to tutor him to-day, and to insist, in *my* peremptory way, on his forbearing to write or read late this evening, that my picture might not have blood-shot eyes.

Merlin[4] has been here to tune the fortepianos.[5] He told Mrs. Davenant[6] and me that he had thoughts of inventing a particular mill to grind old ladies young, as he was so prodigiously fond of their company. I suppose he thought we should bring *grist.* Was that the way to put people in *tune*? I asked him.

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[1] The approaching marriage of Susan Burney to Captain Molesworth Phillips of the Marines (one of James Burney's comrades on Cook's last voyage), which took place at the beginning of 1782 (see *post*, vol. ii. letter of March 19, 1782).

[2] No doubt the double picture of Mrs. Thrale and Queenie, which afterwards hung over the fireplace in the Library at Streatham. The lady liked it no better than her husband. "There is really no resemblance," she said, "and the *character* is less like *my* father's daughter than Pharaoh's."

[3] For his portrait for the Thrale Gallery. It now belongs to Archdeacon Burney. It was bought at the Thrale sale of May 1816, by Dr. Burney's son, Dr. Charles Burney of Greenwich, for £84 (*Piozziana*, 1833, p. 51).

[4] John Joseph Merlin, 1735-1803, a popular French mechanician and pianoforte maker, at this date the rage in London, where everything for a time was *à la Merlin*. He had come to England in 1760; and in 1768-73, he was Director of Cox's Museum in Spring Gardens. Afterwards he had an exhibition of automata etc. in Prince's Street, Hanover Square, which was known as "Merlin's Cave." Gainsborough painted him (see *post*, under June 16), and the portrait was among the artist's last exhibited works.

[5] Pianofortes, *i.e.* harpsichords with hammers, had only recently appeared in England; and "Daddy" Crisp is credited with the receipt of the first which had been made by an English monk at Rome. Crisp sold it to Fulke Greville for 100 guineas (*Early Diary*, 1889, i. liv.).

[6] Mrs. Davenant, of Red Lion Square, hereafter described as "one of the saucy women of the *ton*," was a Cotton, and Mrs. Thrale's cousin.

Doctor Burney says your letters and mine are alike, and that it comes by writing so incessantly to each other. I feel proud and pleased, and find I shall slip pretty readily into the Susannuccia's place, when she goes to settle on her £700 a-year; of which God give her joy seven hundred times over, dear creature! I never knew how it was to love an *incognita* but Susan Burney: my personal acquaintance with her is actually nothing—is it?—and yet we always seem to understand one another. H. L. T.

Mrs. Thrale to Miss F. Burney

Streatham, *Thursday,* 11*th.*

I never was so glad of a letter from you before: the dear Doctor had been in the room just half-an-hour, and had frighted me with an account of your fever. Thank God there is no harm come to my sweet little friend; her spirits and her affection are as strong as ever, for all Dr. Johnson,—who says nobody loves each other much when they have been parted long. How well do you know him, and me, and all of us,—and talk of *my* penetration!

Your father sits for his picture in the Doctor of music's gown; and Bartolozzi makes an engraving from it to place at the head of the book.[1] Sir Joshua delights in the portrait, and says 'twill be the best among them. I hope it will; and by this time, perhaps, you may have begun thinking of the *miniature* too; but it is not touched yet, I assure you. Sweet Susannuccia! I *will* slide into her place; I shall get more of your company, too, and more—is there any more to be had?—of your confidence. Yes, yes, there is a little, to be sure; but dear Mrs. Thrale shall have it all now. Oh, 'tis an excellent match! and he has £700 a-year—that is, he *will* have: it is entailed, and irrevocable.

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[1] The second volume of the *History of Music,* which appeared in 1782.

I send this by your father, who will put it in the post; not a frank to-day for love or money. I did not intend to having written so soon. He and I shall meet at St. James's this day se'nnight. The Owhyhee[1] is to be trimmed with grebeskins and gold to the tune of £65—the trimming only. What would I give to show it to you!—or show you anything, for that matter, that would *show* how affectionately I am yours!

. . . . .

Dr. Burney says you carry bird-lime in your brains, for everything that lights there sticks. I think you carry it in your heart, and that mine sticks very close to it. So adieu! H. L. T.

MRS. THRALE TO MISS BURNEY

GROSVENOR SQUARE, *Tuesday, Feb.* 7, 1781.

This moment Dick Burney tells me how ill you are. My dear, how shall I keep from stepping into a post-chaise, and sousing through Gascoyne Lane to look after you? Complicated as my engagements are, between business and flash, I shall certainly serve you so, if you do not make haste and be well.

Yesterday I had a conversazione. Mrs. Montagu was brilliant in diamonds, solid in judgment, critical in talk. Sophy smiled, Piozzi sung,[2]

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[1] Mrs. Thrale had a court dress woven at Spitalfields, from a pattern of Owhyhee manufacture, brought thence by Captain Burney [*Mrs. Barrett's note*]. A letter from Susan Burney, dated January 19, 1781 (*Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 267), refers to this costume.

[2] When Mrs. Thrale was at Brighton in 1780, Miss Burney had recommended Signor Piozzi to her by letter as "a man likely to lessen the burden of life to her" (*Autobiography, etc.* 1861, i. 147, and ii. 49).

Pepys panted with admiration, Johnson was good-humoured, Lord John Clinton attentive, Dr. Bowdler lame, and my master not asleep. Mrs. Ord looked elegant, Lady Rothes dainty, Mrs. Davenant dapper, and Sir Philip's[1] curls were all blown about by the wind. Mrs. Byron rejoices that her Admiral and I agree so well; the way to his heart is connoisseurship it seems, and for a background and contorno, who comes up to Mrs. Thrale, you know.

Captain Fuller flashes away among us. How that boy loves rough merriment! the people all seem to keep out of his way for fear.

Aunt Cotton died firmly persuaded that Mrs. Davenant was a natural, and that I wrote her letters for her—how odd!

Many people said she was the prettiest woman in the room last night,—and that is as odd; Augusta Byron, and Sophy Streatfield, and Mrs. Hinchliffe,[2] being present.

Mrs. Montagu talked to me about you for an hour t'other day, and said she was amazed that so delicate a girl could write so boisterous a book.

Loveliest Burney, be as well as ever you can, pray do. When you are with me, I think I love you from habit; when you are from me, I fancy distance endears you: be that as it may, your own father can alone love you better, or wish you better, or desire the sight of you more sincerely, than does your H. L. T.

Dr. Johnson is very good and very *clubbable*, but Sir R. Jebb is quite a scourge to me. Who now would believe that I cannot make a friend of that man, but am forced to fly to Dr. Pepys[3] for comfort? He is so haughty, so impracticable a creature; and yet I esteem and honour him, though I cannot make him feel anything towards me but desire of *downing*, etc.

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[1] Sir Philip Jennings Clerke.

[2] Perhaps the wife of the Bishop of Peterborough, *née* Elizabeth Crewe.

[3] Sir Lucas Pepys, 1742-1830, was not created a baronet until 1784.

Miss Burney to Mrs. Thrale

Chessington, *February* 8, 1781.

This moment have two sweet and most kind letters from my best-loved Mrs. Thrale made amends for no little anxiety which her fancied silence had given me. I know not what is now come to this post; but there is nothing I can bear with so little patience as being tricked out of any of your letters. They do, indeed, give me more delight than I can express; they seem to me the perfection of epistolary writing; for, in Dr. Johnson's phrase, all that is not kindness is wit, and all that is not wit is kindness.

What you tell me of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Carter gives me real concern; it is a sort of general disgrace to us; but, as you say, it shall have nothing to do with you and I. Mrs. Montagu, as we have often agreed, is a character rather to respect than love, for she has not that *don d'aimer* by which alone love can be made fond or faithful; and many as are the causes by which respect may be lessened, there are very few by which it can be afterwards restored to its first dignity. But where there is real affection, the case is exactly reversed; few things can weaken, and every trifle can revive it.

Yet not for forty years, in this life at least, shall we continue to love each other; I am very sure I, for one, shall never last half that time. If you saw but how much the illness of a week has lowered and injured me, considering in what perfect health I came hither, you would be half astonished; and that in spite of the utmost care and attention from every part of this kind family. I have just, with great difficulty, escaped a relapse, from an unfortunate fresh cold with which I am at this time struggling. Long last you, dearest madam!—I am sure in the whole world I know not such another.

. . . . . .

I think I shall always hate this book[1] which has kept me so long away from you, as much as I shall always love *Evelina*, who first *comfortably* introduced me to you; an event which I may truly say opened a new, and, I hope, an exhaustless source of happiness to your most gratefully affectionate F. B.

Journal resumed

(Addressed to Mr. Crisp.)

March 23, 1781.—I have very narrowly escaped a return of the same vile and irksome fever which with such difficulty has been conquered, and that all from vexation. Last week I went to dinner in Grosvenor Square.[2] I ran upstairs, as usual, into Mrs. Thrale's dressing-room, and she there acquainted me that Mr. Thrale had resolved upon going abroad: *first* to Spa, next to Italy, and then whither his fancy led him! that Dr. Johnson was to accompany them, but that, as their journey was without limit either of time or place, as Mr. Thrale's ill state of health and strange state of mind would make it both melancholy and alarming, she could not in conscience think of taking *me* from my own friends and country without knowing either whither, or for what length of time.

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[1] *Cecilia; or, Memoirs of an Heiress*—upon which Miss Burney was then engaged (see *ante*, pp. 312 and 344).

[2] This was a furnished house, taken by advice of Thrale's doctors.

She would write to me, however, every post; leave me the keys of all she left of any value, and, in case of any evil to herself, make me her executrix!

Oh, what words! and what a scheme! I was so infinitely shocked, surprised, and grieved, that I was forced to run away from her, and insist upon hearing no more; neither could I sufficiently recover even to appear at dinner, as Dr. Johnson, Mr. Seward, and Mr. Ingram, were of the party; I was obliged, therefore, to shut myself up all the afternoon.

You will not, I am sure, wonder that I should be utterly disconcerted and afflicted by a plan so wild in itself, and so grievous to me. I was, indeed, hardly able to support myself with any firmness all day; and unfortunately, there was in the evening a great rout. I was then obliged to appear, and obliged to tell everybody I was but half recovered from my late indisposition.

The party was very large, and the company very brilliant. I was soon encircled by acquaintances, and forced to seem as gay as my neighbours. My steady companions were Miss Coussmaker,[1] Augusta Byron, Miss Ord, and Miss Thrale; and the *S. S.* never quits me.

I had a long conversation with the new Lord Sheffield; and, as I had never seen him since he was Colonel Holroyd,[2] I was ridiculously enough embarrassed with his new title, blundering from *my lord* to *sir*, and from *sir* to *my lord*. He gave me a long account of his Coventry affairs, and of the commitment of the sheriffs to Newgate. He is a spirited and agreeable man, and, I doubt not, will make himself conspicuous in the right way. Lady

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[1] See *ante*, p. 33 *n.*

[2] Gibbon's friend, John Baker Holroyd, 1735-1821, a colonel of dragoons, who had just been created an Irish baron (Baron Sheffield of Dunamore, Co. Meath). He became Earl of Sheffield in 1802.

Sheffield[1] was also very civil; and, as she came second, I was better prepared, and therefore gave her ladyship her title with more readiness; which was lucky enough, for I believe she would much less have liked the omission.

Mrs. Thrale took much pains to point out her friend Lord John Clinton to me, and me to him: he is extremely ugly, but seems lively and amiable.

The greatest beauty in the room, except the S. S., was Mrs. Gwynn, lately Miss Horneck;[2] and the greatest fright was Lord Sandys.[3]

I have time for nothing more about this evening, which, had not my mind been wholly and sadly occupied by other matters, would have been very agreeable to me.

The next day I again spent in Grosvenor Square, where nothing new had passed about this cruel journey. I then met a very small party, consisting only of Mrs. Price, who was a *Miss Evelyn*, Miss Benson, Dr. Johnson, and Mrs. Carter.

The latter, as there were so few folks, talked a good deal, and was far more sociable and easy than I had yet seen her. Her talk, too, though all upon books (for life and manners she is as ignorant of as a nun), was very unaffected and good-humoured, and I liked her exceedingly. Mrs. Price is a very sensible, shrewd, lofty, and hard-headed woman. Miss Benson not very unlike her.

Tuesday.—I passed the whole day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's with Miss Palmer, who, in the morning, took me to see some most beautiful fans, painted by Poggi, from designs of Sir Joshua, Angelica, West, and Cipriani, on leather; they are, indeed, more delightful than can well be imagined: one was bespoke by the Duchess of Devonshire, for a present to some woman of rank in France, that was to cost £30.

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[1] Abigail, first Lady Sheffield. She had been a Miss Way. She died April 3, 1793.

[2] See *ante*, p. 171.

[3] Edwin Sandys, second Baron, *d.* 1801.

We were accompanied by Mr. Eliot, the knight of the shire for Cornwall, a most agreeable, lively, and very clever man.

We then went to Mr. Webber's, to see his South Sea drawings.[1] Here we met Captain King,[2] who chiefly did the honours in showing the curiosities and explaining them. He is one of the most natural, gay, honest, and pleasant characters I ever met with. We spent all the rest of the morning here, much to my satisfaction. The drawings are extremely well worth seeing; they consist of views of the country of Otaheite, New Zealand, New Amsterdam, Kamschatka, and parts of China; and portraits of the inhabitants done from the life.

When we returned to Leicester Fields we were heartily welcomed by Sir Joshua. Mr. Eliot stayed the whole day; and no other company came but Mr. Webber, who was invited to tea. Sir Joshua is fat and well. He is preparing for the Exhibition a new "Death of Dido"; portraits of the three beautiful Lady Waldegraves, Horatia, Laura, and Maria, all in one picture, and at work with the tambour;[3] a Thais, for which a *Miss Emily*, a celebrated courtesan, sat, at the desire of the Hon. Charles Greville;[4] and what others

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[1] John Webber, 1750-93, landscape painter, and draughtsman on Cook's third voyage, 1776-80. His coloured etchings were published 1787-92.

[2] James King, 1750-84, accompanied Cook as astronomer and second lieutenant in 1776, and prepared the journal of his third voyage for the press.

[3] All these pictures, with eleven others, were exhibited in 1781 (see *post*, p. 491). Walpole's nieces cost him 800 guineas (*Walpoliana*, 1799, ii. 157). Horatia married Lord Hugh Seymour; Laura, Viscount Chewton; and Maria, the Earl of Euston.

[4] Opinions are divided whether this lady's surname was Bertie, Pott,

I know not: but his room and gallery are both crowded.

Thursday.—I spent the whole day again in Grosvenor Square, where there was a very gay party to dinner; Mr. Boswell,[1] Dudley Long, Mr. Adair, Dr. Delap, Mr. B——,[2] Dr. Johnson, and my father; and much could I write of what passed, if it were possible for me to get time. Mr. B—— was just as absurdly pompous as at Brighton; and, in the midst of dinner, without any sort of introduction, or reason, or motive, he called out aloud,—

> "Sweet are the slumbers of the charming maid!"[3]

A laugh from all parties, as you may imagine, followed this exclamation; and he bore it with amazing insensibility.

"What's all this laugh for?" cried Dr. Johnson, who had not heard the cause.

"Why, sir," answered Mrs. Thrale, when she was able to speak, "Mr. B—— just now called out,—nobody knows why,—'Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous maid!'"

"No, no, not *virtuous*," cried Mr. Boswell, "he said *charming*; he thought that better!"

"Ay, sure, sir," cried Mr. B——, unmoved; "for why say *virtuous*?—can we doubt a fair female's virtue?—oh fie, oh fie! 'tis a superfluous epithet."

"But," cried Mrs. Thrale, "in the original it is the *virtuous man*; why do you make it a *maid* of the sudden, Mr. B——?"

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or Coventry. Northcote maintained that the picture represented a Miss Emily Coventry, who had been painted as far back as 1776. In this case, it must have been finished in 1781 for Greville, who gave 100 guineas for it.

[1] Boswell makes no special mention of this dinner; and this, apparently, is Miss Burney's first reference to Boswell, whom she must have met before at Streatham. See APPENDIX, p. 509.

[2] See *ante*, p. 292.

[3] Addison's *Cato*, Act V. Scene iv. The last two words should be "virtuous man," as corrected by Mrs. Thrale.

"I was alarmed at first," cried Dr. Delap, "and thought he had caught Miss Burney *napping*; but when I looked at her, and saw her awake, I was at a loss, indeed, to find the reason of the change."

"Here, sir! my lad!" cried Mr. B—— to the servant; "why, my head's on fire! What! have you got never a screen? Why, I shall be what you may call a *hot-headed fellow*! I shall be a mere *rôti*!"

In the afternoon we were joined by Mr. Crutchley, Mr. Byron, and Mr. Selwin; and then we had a thousand private conferences and consultations concerning the Spa journey.

I have been so often and so provokingly interrupted in writing this, that I must now finish it by *lumping* matters at once. Sir Richard Jebb and Dr. Pepys have both been consulted concerning this going abroad, and are both equally violent against it, as they think it even unwarrantable, in such a state of health as Mr. Thrale's; and, therefore, it is settled that a great meeting of his friends is to take place before he actually prepares for the journey, and they are to encircle him in a body, and endeavour, by representations and entreaties, to prevail with him to give it up; and I have little doubt myself but, amongst us, we shall be able to succeed.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MRS. THRALE[1]

Wednesday Evening [*April* 4].

You bid me write to you, and so I will; you bid me pray for you, and so, indeed, I do, for the restoration of your sweet peace of mind. I pray for your resignation to this hard blow, for the continued union and exertion of your virtues with your talents, and for the happiest reward their exertion can meet with, in the gratitude and prosperity of your children. These are my prayers for my beloved Mrs. Thrale; but these are not my only ones; no, the unfailing warmth of her kindness for myself I have rarely, for a long time past, slept without first petitioning.

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[1] This letter was written in reply to a few words from Mrs. Thrale, in which, alluding to her husband's sudden death, she begs Miss Burney to "write to me—pray for me!" The hurried note from Mrs. Thrale is thus endorsed by Miss Burney:—"Written a few hours after the death of Mr. Thrale, which happened by a sudden stroke of apoplexy, on the morning of a day [April 4, 1781] on which half the fashion of London had been invited to an intended assembly at his house in Grosvenor Square" [*Mrs. Barrett's note*].

I ran away without seeing you again when I found you repented that sweet compliance with my request which I had won from you. For the world would I not have pursued you, had I first seen your prohibition, nor could I endure to owe that consent to teasing which I only solicited from tenderness. Still, however, I think you had better have suffered me to follow you; I might have been of some use; I hardly could have been in your way. But I grieve now to have forced you to an interview which I would have spared myself as well as you, had I foreseen how little it would have answered my purpose.

Yet though I cannot help feeling disappointed, I am not surprised; for in any case at all similar, I am sure I should have the same eagerness for solitude.

I tell you nothing of how sincerely I sympathise in your affliction; yet I believe that Mr. Crutchley and Dr. Johnson alone do so more earnestly; and I have some melancholy comfort in flattering myself that, allowing for the difference of our characters, that true regard which I felt was as truly returned. Nothing but kindness did I ever meet with; he ever loved to have me, not merely with his family, but with himself; and gratefully shall I ever remember a thousand kind expressions of esteem and good opinion, which are now crowding upon my memory.

Ah, dearest madam! you had better have accepted me; I am sure, if unfit for *you*, I am at this time unfit for everybody. Adieu, and Heaven preserve my heart's dearest friend! Don't torment yourself to write to me, nor will I even ask Queeny, though she is good, and I believe would not deny me; but what can you say but that you are sad and comfortless? and do I not know that far too well? I will write again to you, and a thousand times again, for nothing am I more truly than your F. B.

Miss F. Burney to Mrs. Thrale

Saturday, April 6.

I would I had some commission, some business, some pretence for writing to my best-loved friend; for write I must, while I have the faintest hope my letters will be received without aversion. Yet I have nothing on earth to say, but how much I love and how truly I am grieved for her. To *you*, dearest madam, I can offer nothing by way of comfort or consolation, whatever I might do to many others; but what could I urge which you have not a thousand times revolved in your own mind? Dr. Johnson alone could offer anything new, or of strength to deserve attention from Mrs. Thrale. The rectitude and purity of your principles, both religious and moral, I have often looked up to with reverence, and I now no more doubt their firmness in this time of trial than if I witnessed their operation. Queeny, too, I saw was bent upon exerting the utmost fortitude upon this first, and I believe, indeed, most painful occasion to her that could call for it. May she now for her sweet mother unite all the affection and attention which hitherto have deserved to be divided!

Many friends call and send here to inquire after you; but I have myself avoided them all. I cannot yet bear the conversation which is to follow every meeting. To be with *you* I would wrap myself up in misery; but, without such a motive, no one more hasty to run away from all that is possible to be fled from.

Dr. Johnson, I hear, is well. I hear nothing else I have any wish to communicate.

Adieu, most dear madam; and still love, when you have time and composure to again think of her, the sincerest, the gratefulest, the fondest of your friends, in F. B. who, though she first received your affection as an unmerited partiality, hopes never to forfeit, and perhaps some time to deserve it.

I do not even request an answer; I scarce *wish* for it; because I know what it must be. But I will write again in a few days. My kind love to Miss Thrale. F. B.

MISS F. BURNEY TO MR. CRISP

STREATHAM, *April* 29, 1781.

Have you not, my dearest daddy, thought me utterly lost? and, indeed, to all power of either giving or taking comfort, I certainly have been for some time past. I did not, it is true, *hope* that poor Mr. Thrale could live very long, as the alteration I saw in him only during my absence while with you had shocked and astonished me. Yet, still the suddenness of the blow gave me a horror from which I am not even now recovered. The situation of sweet Mrs. Thrale, added to the true concern I felt at his loss, harassed my mind till it affected my health, which is now again in a state of precariousness and comfortless restlessness that will require much trouble to remedy.

You have not, I hope, been angry at my

silence; for, in truth, I have had no spirits to write, nor, latterly, ability of *any* kind, from a headache that has been incessant.

I now begin to long extremely to hear more about yourself, and whether you have recovered your sleep and any comfort. The good nursing you mention is always my consolation when I have the painful tidings of your illness; for I have myself experienced the kindness, care, and unwearied attention of the ever-good and friendly Kitty, who, indeed, as you well say, can by no one be excelled in that most useful and most humane of all sciences.

Mrs. Thrale flew immediately upon this misfortune to Brighthelmstone, to Mr. Scrase[1]—*her* Daddy Crisp—both for consolation and counsel; and she has but just quitted him, as she deferred returning to Streatham till her presence was indispensably necessary upon account of proving the will. I offered to accompany her to Brighthelmstone; but she preferred being alone, as her mind was cruelly disordered, and she saw but too plainly I was too sincere a mourner myself to do much besides adding to her grief. The moment, however, she came back, she solicited me to meet her, —and I am now here with her, and endeavour, by every possible exertion, to be of some use to her. She looks wretchedly indeed, and is far from well; but she bears up, though not with calm intrepidity, yet with flashes of spirit that rather, I fear, spend than relieve her. Such, however, is her character, and were this exertion repressed, she would probably sink quite.

Miss Thrale is steady and constant, and very sincerely grieved for her father.

The four executors, Mr. Cator,[2] Mr. Crutchley,

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[1] See *ante*, p. 431.

[2] Mr. John Cator, a timber merchant; afterwards M.P. for Ipswich.

Mr. Henry Smith,[1] and Dr. Johnson, have all behaved generously and honourably, and seem determined to give Mrs. Thrale all the comfort and assistance in their power. She is to carry on the business jointly with them. Poor soul! it is a dreadful toil and worry to her.

Adieu, my dearest daddy. I will write again in a week's time. I have now just been blooded; but am by no means *restored* by that loss. But well and ill, equally and ever, your truly affectionate child,

F. B.

Mr. Crisp to Miss F. Burney

Chessington, May 15, 1781.

My dear Fannikin—I was neither cross nor surprised at not hearing from you so long, as I was at no loss for the cause of your silence. I know you have a heart, and on a late occasion can easily imagine it was too full to attend to forms, or, indeed, to any but the one great object immediately before you. To say the truth, I should be sorry to have your nature changed, for the sake of a letter or two more or less from you; because I can now with confidence say to myself, "The girl is really sincere, and, as she does profess some friendship and regard for me, I can believe her, and am convinced that, if any evil were to befall me, she would be truly sorry for me."

There is a pleasure in such a thought, and I

He was a friend of Johnson, who visited him at his house at Beckenham, and declared that there was "much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge" (Hill's *Boswell*, 1887, iv. 313). In a later letter to Mrs. Thrale, he wrote, "Cator has a rough, manly, independent understanding, and does not spoil it by complaisance: he never speaks merely to please, and seldom is mistaken in things which he has any right to know" (Hill's *Letters of Johnson*, 1892, ii. 374). See *post*, p. [illegible].

[1] Mr Smith was a relation of Thrale.

will indulge it. The steadiness and philosophy of certain of our friends is, perhaps, to be admired; but I wish it not to be imitated by any of my friends. I would have the feelings of their minds be keen and even piercing, but stop there. Let not the poor tenement of clay give way:—if that goes, how shall they abide the peltings of these pitiless storms?[1] Your slight machine is certainly not made for such rough encounters;—for which I am truly sorry. You did not make yourself; allowed!—agreed!—But you may mend yourself, and that is all I require of you.

If I had you here, I should talk to you on this head; but at present I ought not to wish it. Mrs. Thrale has an undoubted right to you, nor should I wish to tear you from her. When the wound is healed, and nothing but the scar remaining, the plaster ought to be removed,—and then I put in my claim.

Let me hear from you soon that your health and spirits are mended—greatly mended. I sincerely wish the same to your beloved friend, to whom you must present my best respects. I am glad she is connected with such worthy people in her affairs. I have more than once observed that the unavoidable necessity of attending to business of indispensable consequence, and that with strict, unabated perseverance, has contributed more to divert, and dissipate, and finally to cure deep sorrow, than all the wise lessons of philosophers, or the well-meant consolations of friends. May she prove an instance to confirm this observation!

As for my own shattered frame, I have had a pretty long and convincing proof that it is not immortal. Gout, rheumatism, indigestion, want of sleep, almost ever since I saw you, I think, may amount pretty nearly to the sum total of Mrs.

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[1] *King Lear*, Act III. Sc. iv.

Thrale's "Three Warnings."[1] If I don't take the hint the fault is my own—Nature has done her part.

Bad as I have been though, I now hobble about the garden with a stick, and for this fortnight past have been gradually mending, though slowly.

Ham and Kate are constantly inquiring after you, and when you will come. I am sure they love you, or I should not love them. Adieu, my Fannikin.—Your affectionate daddy,

S. C.

Journal resumed

Streatham, May 1781. — Miss Owen and I arrived here without incident, which, in a journey of six or seven miles, was really marvellous! Mrs. Thrale came from the Borough with two of the executors, Dr. Johnson and Mr. Crutchley, soon after us. She had been sadly worried, and in the evening frightened us all by again fainting away. Dear creature! she is all agitation of mind and of body: but she is now wonderfully recovered, though in continual fevers about her affairs, which are mightily difficult and complicate indeed. Yet the behaviour of all the executors is exactly to her wish. Mr. Crutchley, in particular, was he a darling son or only brother,[2] could not possibly be more truly devoted to her. Indeed, I am very happy in the revolution in my own mind in favour of this young man, whom formerly I so little liked; for I now see so much of him, business and inclination uniting to bring him hither continually, that if he were disagreeable to me, I should spend my time in a most comfortless manner. On the contrary, I both respect and esteem him very highly; for his whole conduct manifests so much goodness of heart and excellence of principle, that he is fairly *un homme comme il y en a peu*;[1] and that first appearance of coldness, pride, reserve, and sneering, all wears off upon further acquaintance, and leaves behind nothing but good-humour and good-will. And this you must allow to be very candid, when I tell you that, but yesterday, he affronted me so much by a piece of impertinence, that I had a very serious quarrel with him. Of this more anon.

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[1] This well-known tale in verse is printed at vol. ii. pp. 165-69, of Hayward's *Autobiography, etc. of Mrs. Piozzi (Thrale)*, 2nd ed. 1861. It was originally written for the 4to vol. of *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse*, published in 1766 by Johnson's friend, the blind Mrs. Williams (see *ante*, pp. 50 and 169).

[2] See *ante*, p. 133.

Dr. Johnson was charming, both in spirits and humour. I really think he grows gayer and gayer daily, and more *ductile* and pleasant.

Mr. Crutchley stayed till Sunday, when we had many visitors,—Mrs. Plumbe, one of poor Mr. Thrale's sisters; Mrs. Wallace, wife to the Attorney-General, a very ugly, but sensible and agreeable woman; Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, and Mr. Selwin.[2]

Monday Miss Owen left us.

Tuesday came Lord and Lady Westcote, and afterwards Dr. and Mrs. Parker, Dr. Lort, and the Bishop of Killaloe.[3] Dr. Parker is a terrible old proser, and wore me out; Mrs. Parker is well-bred and sensible; my friend Dr. Lort was comical and diverting; and the Bishop of Killaloe is a gay, sprightly, polite, and ready man: I liked him well.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 9.

[2] See *ante*, p. 299.

[3] Thomas Barnard, 1728-1806, Bishop of Killaloe and Kilfenora from 1780 to 1794. This was the Barnard who, in reply to one of Johnson's rough *boutades*, wrote the charming verses on improvement after the age of forty-five, ending:—

> Let Johnson teach one how to place
> In fairest light, each borrow'd grace,
> From him I'll learn to write;
> Copy his clear, familiar style,
> And from the roughness of his file
> Grow like himself—polite.
> (Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, 2nd ed. 1819, i. 221.)

Sunday morning nobody went to church but Mr. Crutchley, Miss Thrale, and myself; and some time after, when I was sauntering upon the lawn before the house, Mr. Crutchley joined me. We were returning together into the house, when Mrs. Thrale, popping her head out of her dressing-room window, called out, "How nicely these men domesticate among us, Miss Burney! Why, they take to us as natural as life!"

"Well, well," cried Mr. Crutchley, "I have sent for my horse, and I shall release you early to-morrow morning. I think yonder comes Sir Philip."

"Oh! you'll have enough to do with *him*," cried she, laughing; "he is well prepared to plague you, I assure you."

"Is he?—and what about?"

"Why, about Miss Burney. He asked me the other day what was my present establishment. 'Mr. Crutchley and Miss Burney,' I answered. 'How well these two names go together,' cried he; 'I think they can't do better than make a match of it: *I* will consent, I am sure,' he added; and to-day, I daresay, you will hear enough of it."

I leave you to judge if I was pleased at this stuff thus communicated; but Mrs. Thrale, with all her excellence, can give up no occasion of making sport, however unseasonable, or even painful.

"I am very much obliged to him, indeed!" cried I drily; and Mr. Crutchley called out, "*Thank him!—thank him!*" in a voice of pride and of pique that spoke him mortally angry.

I instantly came into the house, leaving him to talk it out with Mrs. Thrale, to whom I heard him add, "So this is Sir Philip's kindness!" and her answer, "I wish you no worse luck!"

Now, what think you of this? was it not highly insolent ?—and from a man who has behaved to me hitherto with the utmost deference, good nature, and civility, and given me a thousand reasons, by every possible opportunity, to think myself very high indeed in his good opinion and good graces ? But these rich men think themselves the constant prey of all portionless girls, and are always upon their guard, and suspicious of some design to take them in. This sort of disposition I had very early observed in Mr. Crutchley, and therefore I had been more distant and cold with him than with anybody I ever met with ; but latterly his character had risen so much in my mind, and his behaviour was so much improved, that I had let things take their own course, and no more shunned than I sought him ; for I evidently saw his doubts concerning *me* and *my* plots were all at an end, and his civility and attentions were daily increasing, so that I had become very comfortable with him, and well pleased with his society.

I need not, I think, add that I determined to see as little of this most fearful and haughty gentleman in future as was in my power, since no good qualities can compensate for such arrogance of suspicion ; and, therefore, as I had reason enough to suppose he would, in haste, resume his own reserve, I resolved, without much effort, to be beforehand with him in resuming mine.

At dinner we had a large and most disagreeable party of Irish ladies, whom Mrs. Thrale was necessitated to invite from motives of business and various connections. We were in all fourteen, viz. Sir Philip Clerke ; Mrs. Lambart and her son, a genteel *young* youth ; Miss Owen ; Mr. and Mrs. Perkins ; Mrs. Vincent ; Mrs. O'Riley and Miss O'Riley, her sister-in-law ; Mr. Crutchley, Mrs. and Miss Thrale ; and myself.

I was obliged, at dinner, to be seated between Miss O'Riley and Mr. Crutchley, to whom you may believe I was not very courteous, especially as I had some apprehensions of Sir Philip. Mr. Crutchley, however, to my great surprise, was quite as civil as ever, and endeavoured to be as chatty; but there I begged to be excused, only answering *upon the reply*, and that very drily, for I was indeed horribly provoked with him.

[Indeed, all his behaviour would have been natural and good-humoured, and just what I should have liked, had he better concealed his chagrin at the first accusation; but that, still dwelling by me, made me very indifferent to what followed, though I found he had no idea of having displeased me, and rather sought to be more than less sociable than usual.

I was much diverted during dinner by this Miss O'Riley, who took it in her humour to attack Mr. Crutchley repeatedly, though so discouraging a beau never did I see! *Her* forwardness, and his excessive and inordinate coldness, made a contrast that, added to her *brogue*, which was broad, kept me in a grin irrepressible.

In the afternoon, we had also Mr. Wallace, the Attorney-General, a most squat and squab-looking man;[1] and further I saw not of him.

In the evening, when the Irish ladies, the Perkinses, Lambarts, and Sir Philip, were gone, Mrs. Thrale walked out with Mr. Wallace, whom she had some business to talk over with; and then, when only Miss Owen, Miss T., and I remained, Mr. Crutchley, after repeatedly addressing me, and gaining pretty dry answers, called out suddenly, "Why, Miss Burney! why, what's the matter?"

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[1] James Wallace, *d.* 1783; Solicitor-General, 1778-80; Attorney-General, 1780-83 (see *post*, p. 503).

"Nothing."

"Why, are you stricken, or smitten, or ill?"

"None of the three."

"Oh, then, you are *setting down* all these Irish folks!"

"No, indeed, I don't think them worth the trouble."

"Oh, but I am sure you are; only I interrupted you."

I went on no farther with the argument, and Miss Thrale proposed our walking out to meet her mother. We all agreed; and Mr. Crutchley would not be satisfied without walking next me, though I really had no patience to talk with him, and wished him at Jericho.

"What's the matter?" said he; "have you had a quarrel?"

"No."

"Are you affronted?"

Not a word. Then again he called to Miss Thrale,

"Why, Queeny—why, she's quite in a rage! What have you done to her?"

I still *sulked* on, vexed to be teased; but, though, with a gaiety that showed he had no suspicion of the cause, he grew more and more urgent, trying every means to make me tell him what was the matter, till at last, much provoked, I said,

"I must be strangely in want of a confidant, indeed, to take *you* for one!"

"Why, what an insolent speech!" cried he, half serious and half laughing, but casting up his eyes and hands with astonishment.

He then let me be quiet some time, but in a few minutes renewed his inquiries with added eagerness, begging me to tell *him* if nobody else.

A likely matter! thought I; nor did I scruple to tell him, when forced to answer, that no one had so little chance of success in such a request.

"Why so?" cried he; "for I am the best person in the world to trust with a secret, as I always forget it."

He continued working at me till we joined Mrs. Thrale and the Attorney-General. And then Miss Thrale, stimulated by him, came to inquire if I had really taken anything amiss of *her*. No, I assured her.

"Is it of *me*, then?" cried Mr. Crutchley, as if sure I should say *no*; but I made no other answer than desiring him to desist questioning me.

"So I will," cried he; "only clear *me*,—only say it is not *me*."

"I shall say nothing about the matter; so do pray be at rest."

"Well, but it can't be *me*, I know: only say that. It's Queeny, I daresay."

"No, indeed."

"Then it's *you*," cried Miss Thrale; "and I'm glad of it, with all my heart!"

He then grew quite violent, and at last went on with his questions till, by being quite silent to them, he could no longer doubt who it was. He seemed then wholly amazed, and entreated to know what he had done; but I tried only to avoid him, and keep out of his way.

Soon after the Attorney-General took his leave, during which ceremony Mr. Crutchley, coming behind me, exclaimed,

"Who'd think of this creature's having any venom in her!"

"Oh yes," answered I, "when she's provoked."

"But have *I* provoked you?"

Again I got off. Taking Miss Thrale by the arm, we hurried away, leaving him with Mrs.

Thrale and Miss Owen. He was presently, however, with us again; and when he came to my side, and found me really trying to talk of other matters with Miss Thrale, and avoid him, he called out,

"Upon my life, this is too bad! *Do* tell me, Miss Burney, what is the matter? If you won't, I protest I'll call Mrs. Thrale, and make her work at you herself."

I now, in my turn, entreated he would not; for I knew she was not to be safely trusted with anything she could turn into ridicule. I was, therefore, impatient to have the whole matter dropped; and after assuring him very drily, yet peremptorily, that I should never satisfy him, I started another subject with Miss Thrale, and we walked quietly on.

He exclaimed, with a vehemence that amazed me in return, "Why will you not tell me? Upon my life, if you refuse me any longer, I'll call the whole house to speak for me!"

"I assure you," answered I, "that will be to no purpose; for I must offend *myself* by telling it, and therefore I shall mention it to nobody."

"But what in the world have I done?"

"Nothing; you have done nothing."

"What have I *said*, then? Only let me beg your pardon,—only let me know what it is, that I *may* beg your pardon."

I then took up the teasing myself, and quite insisted upon his leaving us and joining Mrs. Thrale. He begged me to tell Miss Thrale, and let her mediate, and entreated her to be his agent; which, in order to get rid of him, she promised; and he then slackened his pace, though very reluctantly, while we quickened ours.

Miss Thrale, however, asked me not a question, which I was very glad of, as the affair, trifling as it is, would be but mortifying to mention; and though I could not, when so violently pressed, disguise my resentment, I was by no means disposed to make any serious complaint. I merely wished to let the gentleman know I was not so much his humble servant as to authorise even the smallest disrespect from him.

He was however, which I very little expected, too uneasy to stay long away; and when we had walked on quite out of hearing of Mrs. Thrale and Miss Owen, he suddenly galloped after us.

"How odd it is of you," said Miss Thrale, "to come and intrude yourself in this manner upon anybody that tries so to avoid you!"

"Have *you* done anything for me?" cried he; "I don't believe you have said a word."

"Not I, truly!" answered she; "if I can keep my own self out of scrapes, it's all I can pretend to."

"Well, but do tell me, Miss Burney,—pray tell me! indeed, this is quite too bad; I shan't have a wink of sleep all night. If I have offended you, I am very sorry indeed; but I am sure I did not mean——"

"No, sir!" interrupted I, "I don't suppose you *did* mean to offend me, nor do I know why you should. I expect from you neither good nor ill,—civility I think myself entitled to, and that is all I have any desire for."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed he. "Tell me, however, but what it is, and if I have said anything unguardedly, I am extremely sorry, and I most sincerely beg your pardon."

Is it not very strange that any man, in the same day, could be so disdainfully proud and so condescendingly humble? I was never myself more astonished, as I had been firmly persuaded he would not have deigned to take the smallest notice of me from the moment of his hearing Sir Philip's idle raillery.

I now grew civiller, for I dreaded his urgency, as it was literally impossible for me to come to the point.

I told him, therefore, that I was sorry he took so much trouble, which I had by no means intended to give him, and begged he would think of it no more.

He was not, however, to be so dismissed. Again he threatened me with Mrs. Thrale, but again I assured him nothing could less answer to him.

"Well, but," cried he, "if you will not let me know my crime, why, I must never speak to you any more."

"Very well," answered I, "if you please we will proclaim a mutual silence henceforward."

"Oh," cried he, "*you*, I suppose, will be ready enough; but to *me* that would be a loss of very great pleasure. If you would tell me, however, I am sure I could explain it off, because I am sure it has been done undesignedly."

"No, it does not admit of any explanation; so pray don't mention it any more."

"Only tell me what part of the day it was."

Whether this unconsciousness was real, or only to draw me in so that he might come to the point, and make his apology with greater ease, I know not; but I assured him it was in vain he asked, and again desired him to puzzle himself with no further recollections.

"Oh," cried he, "but I shall think of everything I have ever said to you for this half year. I am sure, whatever it was, it must have been unmeant and unguarded."

"That, sir, I never doubted; and probably you thought me hard enough to hear anything without minding it."

"Good Heaven, Miss Burney! why, there is nobody I would not sooner offend,—nobody in the world! Queeny knows it. If Queeny would speak, she could tell you so. Is it not true, Miss Thrale?"

"I shall say nothing about it; if I can keep my own neck out of the collar, it's enough for me."

"But won't it plead something for me that you are sure, and *must* be sure, it was by blunder, and not design?"

"Indeed I am sorry you take all this trouble, which is very little worth your while; so do pray say no more."

"But will you forgive me?"

"Yes."

"It seems to come very hard from you. Will you promise to have quite forgiven it by the time I return next Thursday?"

"Oh, I hope I shall have no remembrance of any part of it before then. I am sorry you know anything about it; and if you had not been so excessively earnest, I should never have let you; but I could not say an untruth when pushed so hard."

"I hope, then, it will be all dissipated by to-morrow morning."

"Oh, surely! I should be very much surprised if it outlasted the night."

"Well, but then will you be the same? I never saw such a change. If you are serious——"

"Oh no, I'll be wondrous merry!"

"I *beg* you will think no more of it. I—I believe I know what it is; and, indeed, I was far from meaning to give you the smallest offence, and I most earnestly beg your pardon. There is nothing I would not do to assure you how sorry I am. But I hope it will be all over by the time the candles come. I shall look to see, and I hope—I beg—you will have the same countenance again."

I now felt really appeased, and so I told him.

We then talked of other matters till we reached home, though it was not without difficulty I could even yet keep him quiet. I then ran upstairs with my cloak, and stayed till supper-time, when I returned without, I hope, any remaining appearance of *dudgeon* in my *phiz*; for after so much trouble and humiliation, it would have been abominable to have shown any.

I see, besides, that Mr. Crutchley, though of a cold and proud disposition, is generous, amiable, and delicate, and, when not touched upon the tender string of *gallantry*, concerning which he piques himself upon invariable hardness and immovability, his sentiments are not merely just, but refined.

. . . . . .

After supper, Mr. Crutchley, though he spoke to me two or three times with an evident intention to observe my looks and manner in answering him, which were both meant to be much as usual, seemed still dissatisfied both with his own justification and my appeasement; and when we all arose to go to bed, he crossed over to me, and said in a whisper, "I have begged Miss Thrale to intercede for me; she will explain all; and I hope——"

"Very well—very well," said I, in a horrible hurry; "there is no occasion for anything more."

For Mrs. and Miss Thrale, and Miss Owen, were all standing waiting for me: he put himself, however, before me, so that I could not get away, and went on:—

"Only hear me,—*pray* hear me. Is it what *she* (pointing to Mrs. Thrale) put about in the morning?"

"I'll tell you another time," cried I, in fifty agonies to see how they were all ready to titter, which he, whose back was to them, perceived not.

"I have told Miss Thrale what I thought it was," he continued, "and she will explain it all, and tell you how very impossible it was I could think of offending you. Indeed, I beg your pardon! I do, indeed, most sincerely. I hope you will think of it no more,—I hope it will be all over."

"It *is* all over," cried I, still trying to get away.

"Well, but—stop—only tell me if it was *that*——"

"Ay—ay—to-morrow morning"; and then I forced myself into the midst of them, and got off.]

Streatham, Thursday.—This was the great and most important day to all this house, upon which the sale of the Brewery was to be decided. Mrs. Thrale went early to town, to meet all the executors, and Mr. Barclay, the Quaker, who was the *bidder.*[1] She was in great agitation of mind, and told me if all went well she would wave a white pocket-handkerchief out of the coach window.

Four o'clock came and dinner was ready, and no Mrs. Thrale. Five o'clock followed, and no Mrs. Thrale. Queeny and I went out upon the lawn, where we sauntered, in eager expectation, till near six, and then the coach appeared in sight, and a white pocket-handkerchief was waved from it.

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[1] David Barclay, the head of a banking firm in Lombard Street. He gave £135,000 for Thrale's brewery, and put his nephew Robert Barclay into the business with Thrale's superintendent, Perkins. Perkins, it seems, found the purchasers when Mrs. Thrale and her coadjutors (see *ante*, p. 472) were fast brewing themselves into bankruptcy, and she personally had been keeping "the counting-house from nine o'clock every morning till five o'clock every evening." At length Perkins, upon whom every one depended, was bribed by her with the offer of the Borough house for his wife (see *ante*, p. 421 *n.*), and brought forward the Barclays as bidders. "Among all my fellow-executors," says Mrs. Thrale, "none but Johnson opposed selling the concern." He "found some odd delight in signing drafts for hundreds and for thousands, to him a new, and as it appeared, delightful occupation" (Hayward's *Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi* (*Thrale*), 2nd ed. 1861, ii. pp. 47-48).

I ran to the door of it to meet her, and she jumped out of it, and gave me a thousand embraces while I gave my congratulations. We went instantly to her dressing-room, where she told me, in brief, how the matter had been transacted, and then we went down to dinner.

Dr. Johnson and Mr. Crutchley had accompanied her home. I determined to behave to Mr. Crutchley the same as before our quarrel, though he did not so to me, for he hardly spoke a word to me. An accident, however, happened after dinner, which made him for a while more loquacious. Mrs. Thrale, in cutting some fruit, had cut her finger, and asked me for some black sticking-plaster, and as I gave it her out of my pocket-book, she was struck with the beautiful glossiness of the paper of a letter which peeped out of it, and rather *waggishly* asked me who wrote to me with so much elegant attention?

"Mrs. Gast," answered I.

"Oh," cried she, "do pray then let me see her hand."

I showed it her, and she admired it very justly, and said,

"Do show it to Mr. Crutchley; 'tis a mighty genteel hand indeed."

I complied, but took it from him as soon as he had looked at it. Indeed, he is the last man in the world to have even desired to read any letter not to himself.

Dr. Johnson now, who, too deaf to hear what was saying, wondered what we were thus handing about, asked an explanation.

"Why, we are all," said Mrs. Thrale, "admiring the hand of Fanny's Mr. Crisp's sister."

"And mayn't I admire it too?" cried he.

"Oh yes," said she; "show it him, Burney."

I put it in his hand, and he instantly opened and began reading it. Now though there was nothing in it but what must reflect honour upon Mrs. Gast, she had charged me not to show it; and, also, it was so *very* flattering to me, that I was quite consternated at this proceeding, and called out,

"Sir, it was only to show you the handwriting, and you have seen enough for that."

"I shall know best myself," answered he, laughing, "when I have seen enough."

And he read on. The truth is I am sure he took it for granted they had all read it, for he had not heard a word that had passed.

I then gave Mrs. Thrale a reproachful glance for what she had done, and she jumped up, and calling out,

"So I have done mischief, I see!" and ran out of the room, followed by Queeny. I stayed hovering over the Doctor to recover my property; but the minute the coast was clear, Mr. Crutchley, taking advantage of his deafness, said,

"Well, ma'am, I hope we are now friends?"

"Yes!" cried I.

"And is it all quite over?"

"Entirely."

"Why, then, do pray," cried he, laughing, "be so good as to let me know *what was our quarrel?*"

"No—no, I shan't!" (cried I, laughing too, at the absurdity of quarrelling and seeming not to know *what for*): "it is all over, and that is enough."

"No, by no means enough: I must really beg you to tell me; I am uneasy till I know. Was it that silly joke of mine at dinner?"

"No, I assure you, it was *no* joke!"

"But was it at dinner, or *before* dinner?"

"Is it not enough that it is over? I am sorry you knew anything of the matter, and I am obliged to you for taking so much trouble about it; so there let it rest."

"But pray do tell me!—if only that I may be more on my guard another time."

"No, pray," cried I, in my turn, "don't be on your *guard*; for if you are, I shall suppose you have taken the resentment up where I have laid it down."

"That I won't do, indeed," said he; "but I merely wish to beg your pardon: and I think my earnestness must at least have convinced you how very sorry I am to have given you any offence."

[Here Dr. Johnson returned me my letter, with very warm praise of its contents. Mrs. Gast would not only have forgiven me, but have been much delighted had she heard his approbation of all she had written to me.

Mr. Crutchley, never satisfied, again began his entreaties that I would "come to the point," while I was putting up my letter; but I hurried out of the room without any new answer, though he called after me,

"I shan't rest, Miss Burney, till you tell me!"

It cannot be, all this time, that he does not know; he merely wants me to mention the matter myself, that with a better grace he may apologise about it. However, I shall certainly not give him that assistance, though far from bearing him any malice. I think of him as well as I did before the *fracas*; for however his pride of indifference urged him so to fly out, it is evident he could half murder himself with self-anger that he has given any cause of displeasure.]

Friday.—Miss Thrale, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Crutchley, and myself, went to town; and, having set down Dr. Johnson at his own house, we went to Bond Street for Miss Owen, and proceeded to the exhibition. I think I need not describe the pictures.[1]

Miss Owen returned with us to Streatham; Mr. Crutchley recovered his spirits, and we all did very well. But in the afternoon, just as we had finished tea, Mr. Crutchley said to Mrs. Thrale,

"Ma'am, I must beg a private conference with you."

"With me?" cried she; "I thought now I had parted with my brewhouse, all our conferences were over."

"No," said he, "one more, just to take leave of them."

Away they went, and when they returned he said it was something about Queeny, who, however, never inquired what. I should not have mentioned this, but that the next morning—

Saturday.—Mrs. Thrale, who sleeps in the next room to mine, called me to her bedside, and said,

"Now, my dearest Tyo,[2] you know not how I hate to keep from you anything. Do you love me well enough to bear to hear something you will mortally dislike, without hating *me* for it?"

"What on earth *could* I hate *you* for?" cried I.

"Nay, 'tis no fault of mine; but still it is owing to me, and I dread to tell you lest it should make you sorry for your kindness to me."

I was quite out of breath at this preparation; and though I warmly and truly, I am sure, protested that nothing upon earth could lessen my affection for her, I was really afraid to ask what was next to follow.

"I am as sorry," continued she, "as I can live, that *any*thing should give you any disturbance, but most especially anything that relates to *me.* I would give you, if I could, nothing but pleasure, for I am sure I receive nothing else from you. Pray, then, don't let any malice, or impertinence, or ridicule, make you hate *me*; for I saw, and you know told you long ago, the world would be ill-natured enough to try to part us; but let it not succeed, for it is worth neither of our attentions."

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[1] See *ante*, p. 466.

[2] When Lieutenant Burney accompanied Captain Cook to Otaheite, each of the English sailors was adopted as a brother by some one of the natives. The ceremony consisted in rubbing noses together, and exchanging the appellation of *Tyo*, or *Taio*, which signified *chosen friend.* This title was sometimes playfully given to Miss Burney by Mrs. Thrale [*Mrs. Barrett's note*].

"On *my* part, I am sure, it cannot succeed," cried I, more and more alarmed; "for I am yours for ever and for ever, and now almost whether I will or not."

"I hope so," cried she, "for I am sure no one *can* love you more; and I am sorry, and grieved, and enraged that your affection and kindness for me should bring you any uneasiness. We are all sorry, indeed; Queeny is very sorry, and Mr. Crutchley is very sorry——"

"You make me more and more afraid," said I; "but pray tell me what it all means?"

"Why you know Mr. Crutchley yesterday called me out of the room to tell me a secret; well, this was to show me a paragraph he had just read in the newspaper, 'And do, ma'am,' says he, 'have the newspaper burnt, or put somewhere safe out of Miss Burney's way; for I am sure it will vex her extremely.'"

Think if this did not terrify me pretty handsomely. I turned sick as death. She gave me the paper, and I read the following paragraph:—

"Miss Burney, the sprightly writer of the elegant novel, *Evelina*, is now domesticated with Mrs. Thrale, in the same manner that Miss More is with Mrs. Garrick, and Mrs. Carter with Mrs. Montagu."

The preparation for this had been so very alarming, that little as I liked it, I was so much afraid of something still worse, that it really was a relief to me to see it; and Mrs. Thrale's excess of tenderness and delicacy about it was such as to have made me amends for almost anything. I promised, therefore, to take it *like a man*; and, after thanking her with the sincerest gratitude for her infinite kindness, we parted to dress.

It is, however, most insufferably impertinent to be thus dragged into print, notwithstanding every possible effort and caution to avoid it. There is nothing, merely concerning myself, that can give me greater uneasiness; for there is nothing I have always more dreaded, or more uniformly endeavoured to avoid.

I think myself, however, much obliged to Mr. Crutchley for his very good-natured interference and attempt to save me this vexation, which is an attention I by no means expected from him. He has scolded Mrs. Thrale since, she says, for having told me, because he perceived it had lowered my spirits; but she thought it most likely I should hear it from those who would tell it me with less tenderness, and, therefore, had not followed his advice.

Sunday.—We had Mr. and Mrs. Davenant here. They are very lively and agreeable, and I like them more and more. Mrs. Davenant is one of the saucy women of the *ton,* indeed; but she has good parts, and is gay and entertaining; and her *sposo,* who passionately adores her, though five years her junior, is one of the best-tempered and most pleasant-charactered young men imaginable.

I had new specimens to-day of the oddities of Mr. Crutchley, whom I do not yet quite understand, though I have seen so much of him. In the course of our walks to-day we chanced, at one time, to be somewhat before the rest of the company, and soon got into a very serious conversation; though we began it by his relating a most ludicrous incident which had happened to him last winter.

There is a certain poor wretch of a villainous painter, one Mr. Lowe,[1] who is in some measure under Dr. Johnson's protection, and whom, therefore, he recommends to all the people he thinks can afford to sit for their pictures. Among these, he made Mr. Seward very readily, and then applied to Mr. Crutchley.

"But now," said Mr. Crutchley, as he told me the circumstance, "I have not a notion of sitting for my picture,—for who wants it? I may as well give the man the money without; but no, they all said that would not do so well, and Dr. Johnson asked me to give *him* my picture. 'And I assure you, sir,' says he, 'I shall put it in very good company, for I have portraits of some very respectable people in my dining-room.' 'Ay, sir,' says I, 'that's sufficient reason why you should not have mine, for I am sure it has no business in such society.' So then Mrs. Thrale asked me to give it to *her*. 'Ay sure, ma'am,' says I, 'you do me great honour; but pray, first, will you do me the favour to tell me what door you intend to put it behind?' However, after all I could say in opposition, I was obliged to go to the painter's. And I found him in such a condition! a room all dirt and filth, brats squalling and wrangling, up two pair of stairs, and a closet, of which the door was open, that Seward well said was quite Pandora's box—it was the repository of all the nastiness, and stench, and filth, and food, and drink, and—— oh, it was too bad to be borne! and 'Oh!' says I, 'Mr. Lowe, I beg your pardon for running away, but I have just recollected another engagement'; so I poked the three guineas in his hand, and told him I would come again another time, and then ran out of the house with all my might."

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[1] Mauritius Lowe, 1746-93. In spite of Miss Burney's adjective, he was a gold medallist, had studied in Rome, and exhibited at the Royal Academy. Johnson befriended him; but he was idle, and neglected to improve the talent he had.

Well, when we had done laughing about this poor unfortunate painter, the subject turned upon portraits in general, and our conference grew very grave: on *his* part it soon became even melancholy. I have not time to *dialogue* it; but he told me he could never bear to have himself the picture of any one he loved, as, in case of their death or absence, he should go distracted by looking at it; and that, as for himself, he never had, and never would sit for his own, except for one miniature by Humphreys,[1] which his sister begged of him, as he could never flatter himself there was a human being in the world to whom it could be of any possible value: "And now," he added, "less than ever!"

This, and various other speeches to the same purpose, he spoke with a degree of dejection that surprised me, as the coldness of his character, and his continually boasted insensibility, made me believe him really indifferent both to love and hatred.

After this we talked of Mrs. Davenant.

"She is very agreeable," said I, "I like her much. Don't you?"

"Yes, very much," said he; "she is lively and entertaining"; and then a moment after, "'Tis wonderful," he exclaimed, "that such a thing as that can captivate a man!"

"Nay," cried I, "nobody more, for her husband quite adores her."

"So I find," said he; "and Mrs. Thrale says men in general like her."

"They certainly do," cried I; "and all the oddity is in you who do not, not in them who do."

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[1] Ozias Humphry, R.A., 1742-1810, the miniaturist.

"May be so," answered he, "but it don't do for me, indeed."

We then came to two gates, and there I stopped short, to wait till they joined us; and Mr. Crutchley, turning about and looking at Mrs. Davenant, as she came forward, said, rather in a muttering voice, and to himself than to me, "What a thing for an attachment! No, no, it would not do for me!—too much glare! too much flippancy! too much hoop! too much gauze! too much slipper! too much neck! Oh, hide it! hide it!—muffle it up! muffle it up! If it is but in a fur cloak, I am for muffling it all up!"

And thus he diverted himself till they came up to us. But never, I believe, was there a man who could endure so very few people. Even Mrs. and Miss Thrale, of whom he is fond to excess, he would rather not see than see with other company!

Is he not a strange composition?

Streatham, June.—I found Dr. Johnson in admirable good-humour, and our journey hither was extremely pleasant. I thanked him for the last batch of his poets,[1] and we talked them over almost all the way.

Sweet Mrs. Thrale received me with her wonted warmth of affection, but shocked me by her own ill looks, and the increasing alteration in her person, which perpetual anxiety and worry have made. I found with her Mrs. Lambart and the Rev. Mr. Jennings, a young brother of Sir Philip Clerke, and Mr. Seward.

Mrs. Lambart I was much pleased with again meeting, for she is going in a few days to Brussels with her son, in order to reside for two years. Mr. Jennings I was not much charmed with; but he may be a good sort of man for all that, and for all he was somewhat over-facetious, or would have been; for Mrs. Thrale, after running to kiss me, introduced me to Sir Philip's brother, who said,

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[1] See *ante*, p. 443.

"Pray, ma'am, may not that fashion go round?"[1]

"No, no, there's no occasion for that," cried I.

"Oh yes, there is," returned he; "it may be an old-fashioned custom, but I am an old-fashioned man, and therefore I rather like it the better. Come, Mrs. Thrale, may I not be introduced *properly* to Miss Burney?"

"No, no," cried she, while I took care to get out of the way, "nobody kisses Miss Burney in this house but myself."

"I have ventured," cried Mr. Seward, "to sometimes touch the tip of Miss Burney's little finger-nail; but never farther."

I then gave Mrs. Thrale some account of my visit to Mrs. Byron, which turned the conversation; and presently entered Mr. Crutchley.

We had a good cheerful day, and in the evening Sir Richard Jebb came; and nothing can I recollect, but that Dr. Johnson *forced* me to sit on a very small sofa with him, which was hardly large enough for himself; and which would have made a subject for a print by Harry Bunbury[2] that would have diverted all London: *ergo*, it rejoiceth me that he was not present.

Wednesday.—We had a terrible noisy day. Mr. and Mrs. Cator came to dinner, and brought with them Miss Collison, a niece. Mrs. Nesbitt[3] was also here, and Mr. Pepys.

The long war which has been proclaimed among the wits concerning Lord Lyttelton's *Life*, by

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[1] Cp. *Early Diary*, 1889, ii. 48, where Miss Burney is kissed "ardurously" by her would-be suitor, Mr. Thomas Barlow.

[2] H. W. Bunbury, the caricaturist, 1750-1811, the husband of Goldsmith's "Little Comedy" (Catherine Horneck).

[3] No doubt Mr. Thrale's sister, Mrs. Nesbitt (afterwards Mrs. Scott).

Dr. Johnson, and which a whole tribe of *blues*, with Mrs. Montagu at their head, have vowed to execrate and revenge, now broke out with all the fury of the first actual hostilities, stimulated by long-concerted schemes and much spiteful information. Mr. Pepys, Dr. Johnson well knew, was one of Mrs. Montagu's steadiest abettors; and, therefore, as he had some time determined to defend himself with the first of them he met, this day he fell the sacrifice to his wrath.

In a long *tête-à-tête* which I accidentally had with Mr. Pepys before the company was assembled, he told me his apprehensions of an attack, and entreated me earnestly to endeavour to prevent it; modestly avowing he was no antagonist for Dr. Johnson; and yet declaring his personal friendship for Lord Lyttelton made him so much hurt by the *Life*, that he feared he could not discuss the matter without a quarrel, which, especially in the house of Mrs. Thrale, he wished to avoid.

It was, however, utterly impossible for me to serve him. I could have stopped Mrs. Thrale with ease, and Mr. Seward with a hint, had either of them begun the subject; but, unfortunately, in the middle of dinner it was begun by Dr. Johnson himself, to oppose whom, especially as he spoke with great anger, would have been madness and folly.

Never before have I seen Dr. Johnson speak with so much passion.

"Mr. Pepys," he cried, in a voice the most enraged, "I understand you are offended by my *Life of Lord Lyttelton*. What is it you have to say against it? Come forth, man! Here am I, ready to answer any charge you can bring!"

"No, sir," cried Mr. Pepys, "not at present; I must beg leave to decline the subject. I told Miss Burney before dinner that I hoped it would not be started."

I was quite frightened to hear my own name mentioned in a debate which began so seriously; but Dr. Johnson made not to this any answer: he repeated his attack and his challenge, and a violent disputation ensued, in which this great but *mortal* man did, to own the truth, appear unreasonably furious and grossly severe. I never saw him so before, and I heartily hope I never shall again. He has been long provoked, and justly enough, at the *sneaking* complaints and murmurs of the Lytteltonians; and, therefore, his long-excited wrath, which hitherto had met no object, now burst forth with a vehemence and bitterness almost incredible.

Mr. Pepys meantime never appeared to so much advantage; he preserved his temper, uttered all that belonged merely to himself with modesty, and all that more immediately related to Lord Lyttelton with spirit. Indeed, Dr. Johnson, in the very midst of the dispute, had the candour and liberality to make him a personal compliment by saying,

"Sir, all that you say, while you are vindicating one who cannot thank you, makes me only think better of you than I ever did before. Yet still I think you do *me* wrong," etc., etc.

Some time after, in the heat of the argument, he called out,

"The more my *Lord Lyttelton* is inquired after, the worse he will appear; Mr. Seward has just heard two stories of him, which corroborate all I have related."

He then desired Mr. Seward to repeat them. Poor Mr. Seward looked almost as frightened as myself at the very mention of his name; but he quietly and immediately told the stories, which consisted of fresh instances, from good authorities, of Lord Lyttelton's illiberal behaviour to Shenstone; and then he flung himself back in his chair, and spoke no more during the whole debate, which I am sure he was ready to vote a bore.

One happy circumstance, however, attended the quarrel, which was the presence of Mr. Cator, who would by no means be prevented talking himself, either by reverence for Dr. Johnson, or ignorance of the subject in question; on the contrary, he gave his opinion, quite uncalled, upon everything that was said by either party, and that with an importance and pomposity, yet with an emptiness and verbosity, that rendered the whole dispute, when in his hands, nothing more than ridiculous, and compelled even the disputants themselves, all inflamed as they were, to laugh. To give a specimen—one speech will do for a thousand.

"As to this here question of Lord Lyttelton, I can't speak to it to the purpose, as I have not read his *Life*, for I have only read the *Life of Pope*; I have got the books though, for I sent for them last week, and they came to me on Wednesday, and then I began them; but I have not yet read *Lord Lyttelton*. *Pope* I have begun, and that is what I am now reading. But what I have to say about Lord Lyttelton is this here: Mr. Seward says that Lord Lyttelton's steward dunned Mr. Shenstone for his rent, by which I understand he was a tenant of Lord Lyttelton's. Well, if he was a tenant of Lord Lyttelton's, why should not he pay his rent?"

Who could contradict this?

When dinner was quite over, and we left the men to their wine, we hoped they would finish the affair; but Dr. Johnson was determined to talk it through, and make a battle of it, though Mr. Pepys tried to be off continually. When they were all summoned to tea, they entered still warm and violent. Mr. Cator had the book in his hand, and was reading the *Life of Lyttelton*, that he might better, he said, understand the cause, though not a creature cared if he had never heard of it.

Mr. Pepys came up to me and said,

"Just what I had so much wished to avoid! I have been crushed in the very onset."

I could make him no answer, for Dr. Johnson immediately called him off, and harangued and attacked him with a vehemence and continuity that quite concerned both Mrs. Thrale and myself, and that made Mr. Pepys, at last, resolutely silent, however called upon.

This now grew more unpleasant than ever; till Mr. Cator, having some time studied his book, exclaimed,

"What I am now going to say, as I have not yet read the *Life of Lord Lyttelton* quite through, must be considered as being only said aside, because what I am going to say——"

"I wish, sir," cried Mrs. Thrale, "it had been *all* set aside; here is too much about it, indeed, and I should be very glad to hear no more of it."

This speech, which she made with great spirit and dignity, had an admirable effect. Everybody was silenced. Mr. Cator, thus interrupted in the midst of his proposition, looked quite amazed; Mr. Pepys was much gratified by the interference; and Dr. Johnson, after a pause, said,

"Well, madam, you *shall* hear no more of it; yet I will defend myself in every part and in every atom!"

And from this time the subject was wholly dropped. This dear violent Doctor was conscious he had been wrong, and therefore he most candidly bore the reproof.

Mr. Cator, after some evident chagrin at having his speech thus rejected, comforted himself by coming up to Mr. Seward, who was seated next me, to talk to him of the changes of the climates from hot to *could* in the countries he had visited; and he prated so much, yet said so little, and pronounced his words so vulgarly, that I found it impossible to keep my countenance, and was once, when most unfortunately he addressed himself to me, surprised by him on the full grin. To soften it off as well as I could, I pretended unusual complacency, and instead of recovering my gravity, I continued a most ineffable smile for the whole time he talked, which was indeed no difficult task. Poor Mr. Seward was as much off his guard as myself, having his mouth distended to its fullest extent every other minute.

When the leave-taking time arrived, Dr. Johnson called to Mr. Pepys to shake hands, an invitation which was most coldly and forcibly accepted.[1] Mr. Cator made a point of Mrs. Thrale's dining at his house soon, and she could not be wholly excused, as she has many transactions with him; but she fixed the day for three weeks hence. They have invited me so often, that I have now promised not to fail making one.

Thursday morning.—Dr. Johnson went to town for some days, but not before Mrs. Thrale read him a very serious lecture upon giving way to such violence; which he bore with a patience and quietness that even more than made his peace with me; for such a man's confessing himself wrong is almost more amiable than another man being steadily right.

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[1] Mr. Pepys's account of this unpleasant incident is given in a letter to Mrs. Montagu at this date—"The moment the cloth was removed, he [Johnson] challenged me to come out (as he called it) and say what I had to object to in his *Life of Lord Lyttelton*. . . . I could not but obey, and so to it we went for three or four hours without ceasing. He once observed that it was the duty of a biographer to state all the failings of a respectable character. We shook hands, however, at parting; which put me much in mind of the parting between Jaques and Orlando—'God be with you; let us meet as seldom as we can! Fare you well; I hope we shall be better strangers!'" The combatants were apparently reconciled two months later (see vol. ii., under August 1781). See also vol. ii., under December 1783, where Miss Burney gives an account of the engagement to Mr. George Cambridge. People, who now read the Doctor's short account of Lyttelton, will perhaps wonder what the dispute was about.

Friday, June 14.—We had my dear father and Sophy Streatfield, who, as usual, was beautiful, caressing, amiable, sweet, and—fatiguing.

Sunday, June 16.—This morning, after church, we had visits from the Pitches, and afterwards from the Attorney-General and Mrs. Wallace,[1] his wife, who is a very agreeable woman. And here I must give you a little trait of Mr. Crutchley, whose solid and fixed character I am at this moment unable to fathom, much as I have seen of him.

He has an aversion, not only to strangers, but to the world in general, that I never yet saw quite equalled. I at first attributed it to shyness, but I now find it is simply disgust. To-day at noon, while I was reading alone in the library, he came in, and amused himself very quietly in the same manner; but, upon a noise which threatened an intrusion, he started up, and as the Pitches entered, he hastened away. After this, the Wallaces came, from whom he kept equally distant; but when we all went out to show the Attorney-General the hot-houses and kitchen-gardens, he returned, I suppose, to the library, for there, when we came back, we found him reading. He instantly arose, and was retreating, but stopped upon my telling him in passing that his particular enemy, Mr. Merlin, was just arrived; and then some nonsense passing among us concerning poor Merlin and Miss Owen, he condescended to turn back and take a chair. He sat then, as usual when with much company, quite silent, till Mr. Wallace began talking of the fatigue he had endured at the birthday, from the weight and heat of his clothes, which were damask and gold, belonging to his place, and of the haste he was in to get at the Queen, that he might speak to her Majesty, and make his escape from so insufferable a situation as the heat, incommodiousness, and richness of his dress, had put him into.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 479.

"Well, sir," interrupted Mr. Crutchley, in the midst of this complaint, to which he had listened with evident contempt, "but you had at least the pleasure of showing this dress at the levee!"

This unexpected sarcasm instantly put an end to the subject, and when I afterwards spoke of it to Mr. Crutchley, and laughed at his little respect for "an officer of the state"—

"Oh!" cried he, "nothing makes me so sick as hearing such ostentatious complaints! The man has but just got the very dress he has been all his life working for, and now he is to parade about its inconvenience!"

This is certainly a good and respectable spirit, though not much calculated to make its possessor popular.

We had afterwards a good deal of sport with Merlin, who again stayed dinner, and was as happy as a prince; but Mr. Crutchley plagued me somewhat by trying to set him upon attacking *me*; which, as I knew his readiness to do better than I chose to confess, was not perfectly to my taste. Once, when Piozzi was making me some most extravagant compliments, upon Heaven knows what of accomplishments and perfections, which he said belonged to the whole *famille Borni*, and was challenging me to speak to him in Italian, which I assured him I could not do, Merlin officiously called out,

"O, je vous assure, Mlle. Burney n'ignore rien; mais elle est si modeste qu'elle ne veut pas, c'est à dire, parler."

And soon after, when a story was told of somebody's *sins*, which I have forgotten, Merlin, encouraged again by some malicious contrivance of Mr. Crutchley's to address himself to me, called out aloud, and very *malàpropos*, "Pour Mlle. Burney, c'est une demoiselle qui n'a jamais péché du tout."

"No, I hope not," said I, in a low voice to Miss Thrale, while they were all holloaing at this oddity; "at least if I had, I think I would not *confess*."

"Tell him so," cried Mr. Crutchley.

"No, no," cried I, "pray let him alone."

"Do you hear, Mr. Merlin," cried he then aloud; "Miss Burney says if she *has* sinned, she will not confess."

"Oh, sir!" answered Merlin, simpering, "for the modest ladies, they never do confess, because, *that is*, they have not got nothing to confess."

During the dessert, mention was made of my father's picture, when this ridiculous creature exclaimed,

"Oh! for that picture of Dr. Burney, Sir Joshua Reynhold has not taken pains, *that is*, to please me! I do not like it. Mr. Gainsborough has done one much more better of me, which is very agreeable indeed.[1] I wish it had been at the Exhibition, for it would have done him a great deal of credit indeed."

There was no standing the absurdity of this "agreeable," and we all laughed heartily, and Mrs. Thrale led the way for our leaving the room.

"Oh!" cried Merlin, half piqued, and half grinning from sympathy, "I assure you there is not nothing does make me so happy, *that is*, as to see the ladies so pleased!"

Monday, June 17.—There passed, some time ago, an agreement between Mr. Crutchley and Mr. Seward, that the latter is to make a visit to the former, at his country-house in Berkshire;[1] and to-day the time was settled: but a more ridiculous scene never was exhibited. The host elect and the guest elect tried which should show least expectation of pleasure from the meeting, and neither of them thought it at all worth while to disguise his terror of being weary of the other. Mr. Seward seemed quite melancholy and depressed in the prospect of making, and Mr. Crutchley absolutely miserable in that of receiving, the visit. Yet nothing so ludicrous as the distress of both, since nothing less necessary than that either should have such a punishment inflicted. I cannot remember half the absurd things that passed; but a few, by way of specimen, I will give.

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[1] See *ante*, p. 458.

"How long do you intend to stay with me, Seward?" cried Mr. Crutchley; "how long do you think you can bear it?"

"Oh, I don't know; I shan't fix," answered the other: "just as I find it."

"Well, but—when shall you come? Friday or Saturday? I think you'd better not come till Saturday."

"Why yes, I believe on Friday."

"On Friday! Oh, you'll have too much of it! what shall I do with you?"

"Why on Sunday we'll dine at the Lyells'. Mrs. Lyell is a charming woman; one of the most elegant creatures I ever saw."

"Wonderfully so," cried Mr. Crutchley; "I like her extremely—an insipid idiot! She never opens her mouth but in a whisper; I never *heard* her speak a word in my life. But what must I do with you on Monday? will you come away?"

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[1] At Sunninghill Park.

"Oh no; I'll stay and see it out."

"Why, how long shall you stay? Why I must come away myself on Tuesday."

"Oh, I shan't settle yet," cried Mr. Seward, very drily. "I shall put up six shirts, and then do as I find it."

"Six shirts!" exclaimed Mr. Crutchley; and then, with equal dryness added—"Oh, I suppose you wear two a-day."

And so on.

APPENDIX

BOSWELL AT STREATHAM PLACE

THE following account of Boswell at Streatham is printed at pp. 190-197 of vol. ii. of the *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832:—

MR. BOSWELL

When next, after this adjuration,[1] Dr. Burney took the Memorialist back to Streatham, he found there, recently arrived from Scotland, Mr. Boswell, whose sprightly Corsican tour, and heroic, almost Quixotic, pursuit of General Paoli, joined to the tour to the Hebrides with Dr. Johnson, made him an object himself of considerable attention.

He spoke the Scotch accent strongly, though by no means so as to affect, even slightly, his intelligibility to an English ear. He had an odd, mock solemnity of tone and manner, that he had acquired imperceptibly from constantly thinking of and imitating Dr. Johnson, whose own solemnity, nevertheless, far from mock, was the result of pensive rumination. There was, also, something slouching in the gait and dress of Mr. Boswell that wore an air, ridiculously enough, of purporting to personify the same model. His clothes were always too large for him; his hair, or wig, was constantly in a state of negligence; and he never for a moment sat still or upright upon a chair. Every look and movement displayed either intentional or involuntary imitation. Yet certainly it was not meant as caricature, for his heart, almost even to idolatry, was in his reverence of Dr. Johnson.

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[1] This refers to a speech by Johnson in reply to Dr. Burney's complaint that his daughter had been from home so long. "'Long? no, Sir! I do not think it long,' cried the Doctor, see-sawing, and seizing both her hands, as if purporting to detain her: 'Sir! I would have her Always come . . . and Never go!'" (*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, 1832, ii. 190).

Dr. Burney was often surprised that this kind of farcical similitude escaped the notice of the Doctor, but attributed his missing it to a high superiority over any such suspicion as much as to his near-sightedness; for fully was Dr. Burney persuaded that had any detection of such imitation taken place, Dr. Johnson, who generally treated Mr. Boswell as a schoolboy,[1] whom, without the smallest ceremony, he pardoned or rebuked, alternately, would so indignantly have been provoked as to have instantaneously inflicted upon him some mark of his displeasure. And equally he was persuaded that Mr. Boswell, however shocked and even inflamed in receiving it, would soon, from his deep veneration, have thought it justly incurred, and after a day or two of pouting and sullenness would have compromised the matter by one of his customary simple apologies of "Pray, Sir, forgive me!"

Dr. Johnson, though often irritated by the officious importunity of Mr. Boswell, was really touched by his attachment. It was indeed surprising, and even affecting, to remark the pleasure with which this great man accepted personal kindness, even from the simplest of mankind; and the grave formality with which he acknowledged it even to the meanest. Possibly it was what he most prized, because what he could least command; for personal partiality hangs upon lighter and slighter qualities than those which earn solid approbation; but of this, if he had least command, he had also least want; his towering superiority of intellect elevating him above all competitors, and regularly establishing him, wherever he appeared, as the first Being of the Society.

As Mr. Boswell was at Streatham only upon a morning visit, a collation was ordered, to which all were assembled. Mr. Boswell was preparing to take a seat that he seemed, by prescription, to consider as his own, next to Dr. Johnson; but Mr. Seward, who was present, waved his hand for Mr. Boswell to move farther on, saying, with a smile, "Mr. Boswell, that seat is Miss Burney's."

He stared, amazed: the asserted claimant was new and unknown to him, and he appeared by no means pleased to resign his prior rights. But, after looking round for a minute or two with an important air of demanding the meaning of this innovation, and receiving no satisfaction, he reluctantly, also resentfully, got another chair, and placed it at the back of the shoulder of Dr. Johnson, while this new and unheard-of rival quietly seated herself as if not hearing what was passing, for she shrunk from the explanation that she feared might ensue, as she saw a smile stealing over every countenance, that of Dr. Johnson himself not excepted, at the discomfiture and surprise of Mr. Boswell.

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[1] Johnson, it may be remembered, was thirty-one years older.

Mr. Boswell, however, was so situated as not to remark it in the Doctor, and of every one else, when in that presence, he was unobservant, if not contemptuous. In truth, when he met with Dr. Johnson, he commonly forbore even answering anything that was said, or attending to anything that went forward, lest he should miss the smallest sound from that voice to which he paid such exclusive, though merited, homage. But the moment that voice burst forth, the attention which it excited in Mr. Boswell amounted almost to pain. His eyes goggled with eagerness; he leant his ear almost on the shoulder of the Doctor; and his mouth dropped open to catch every syllable that might be uttered; nay, he seemed not only to dread losing a word, but to be anxious not to miss a breathing, as if hoping from it, latently or mystically, some information.

But when, in a few minutes, Dr. Johnson, whose eye did not follow him, and who had concluded him to be at the other end of the table, said something gaily and good-humouredly by the appellation of Bozzy, and discovered, by the sound of the reply, that Bozzy had planted himself as closely as he could behind and between the elbows of the new usurper and his own, the Doctor turned angrily round upon him, and, clapping his hand rather loudly upon his knee, said, in a tone of displeasure, "What do you do there, Sir? Go to the table, Sir!"

Mr. Boswell instantly, and with an air of affright, obeyed: and there was something so unusual in such humble submission to so imperious a command that another smile gleamed its way across every mouth except that of the Doctor and of Mr. Boswell, who now, very unwillingly, took a distant seat.

But, ever restless when not at the side of Dr. Johnson, he presently recollected something that he wished to exhibit, and, hastily rising, was running away in its search, when the Doctor, calling after him, authoritatively said: "What are you thinking of, Sir? Why do you get up before the cloth is removed? Come back to your place, Sir!"

Again, and with equal obsequiousness, Mr. Boswell did as he was bid, when the Doctor, pursing his lips not to betray rising risibility, muttered half to himself, "Running about in the middle of meals! One would take you for a Branghton!"

"A Branghton, Sir?" repeated Mr. Boswell, with earnestness, "what is a Branghton, Sir?"

"Where have you lived, Sir," cried the Doctor, laughing, "and what company have you kept not to know that?"

Mr. Boswell, now doubly curious, yet always apprehensive of falling into some disgrace with Dr. Johnson, said, in a low tone, which he knew the Doctor could not hear, to Mrs. Thrale, "Pray, Ma'am, what's a Branghton? Do me the favour to tell me? Is it some animal hereabouts?"

Mrs. Thrale only heartily laughed, but without answering, as she saw one of her guests fearful of an explanation. But Mr. Seward cried, "I'll tell you, Boswell, I'll tell you, if you will walk with me into the paddock; only let us wait till the table is cleared, or I shall be taken for a Branghton too!"

They soon went off together, and Mr. Boswell, no doubt, was fully informed of the road that had led to the usurpation by which he had thus been annoyed. But the Branghton fabricator took care to mount to her chamber ere they returned; and did not come down till Mr. Boswell was gone.

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